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Mary Lawrence promotes healthy living

See story on page 14

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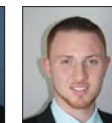
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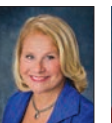
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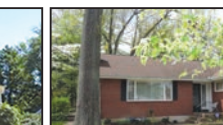
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You will love this spacious 3BR/3BA Ranch. This engaging home highlights a master suite, HW floors & a wood burning FP. Finished lower level with bar. Oversized 2-car garage. A must-see discovery!
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Wethersfield \$269,500
There is a lot to love in this rewarding 3BR/2BA Ranch. Attractive home offers HW floors, enclosed porch and 2 FPs. CAIR/CVAC, garage & gas heat. Large level lot, patio. Enjoy its easy-going style!
Lisa-Bowman.com 860-983-6789



Wethersfield \$264,900
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Claim the unique charms of this 2BR/2+BA Collier Farm's condo! Open floor plan, gas FP, HW floors & large windows. CAIR, deck & garage. Complex offers an village feeling. You won't be disappointed!
SandraWhitaker.com 860-760-5959



Wethersfield \$244,900
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JohnGerardi.com 860-983-4427



Wethersfield \$239,888
Cherish this renovated 4BR home in historic Old Wethersfield. Inviting residence offering HW flooring, updated kitchen w/quartz counter top & spacious bedrooms. Partially finished basement. Gas heat.
MatthewGuida.com 860-888-2732



Wethersfield \$194,900
You'll enjoy life in this delightful 2-3BR/1.5BA Ranch. Enticing home offers open floorplan, corner FP & updated kitchen/baths. Partially finished basement w/sauna. A home that has everything you need.
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Wethersfield \$174,900
Put those cares aside in this light & bright 2BR/1.5BA end-unit condo. Lovely details include open floorplan, updated kitchen & formal dining rm. HW floors, FP & main fl laundry. Many charms to cherish!
Lina D'Angelo 860-380-7121



Wethersfield \$159,900
Become the proud owner of this 2BR/2.5BA end-unit. A happy haven, featuring FP, eat-in kitchen plus walk-out basement. 2nd-floor laundry, central air. Garage, patio. Easy-going, leisurely living!
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Rocky Hill \$339,900
Home, sweet home is yours in this pristine 4BR/1.5BA DeJohn built Colonial. Updated kitchen w/ss apps, formal dining rm & HW floors. Formal living room w/wood burning FP. 1st fl laundry. Deck & patio.
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Rocky Hill \$334,900
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Rocky Hill \$310,000
An excellent move to this 3BR/2+BA Colonial w/wooded views. Ideal features such as hardwood flooring, finished walk-out basement & gas fireplace. Remodeled kitchen with granite & gas range. Deck.
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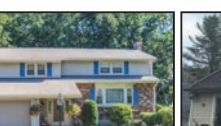
Rocky Hill \$198,500
Prime time! Enjoy it fully in this intriguing 2BR/2+BA condo at Fairway's Edge with woodland views. Lovely details include master suite w/balcony, gas FP & open floor plan. Private deck. Pets allowed.
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Glastonbury \$415,000
Don't miss this 3-4 BR/3BA masterfully restored barn. Incredible property, accented by high beamed ceilings, open floorplan plus natural woodwork, finished basement w/it's own entrance & mastersuite.
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Newington \$379,000
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Newington \$249,900
Create a warm retreat in this comfortable 4BR/1.5BA Colonial! This engaging home highlights fireplace, HW floors & open floorplan. Updated kitchen & baths. Don't miss seeing this very attractive home!
BarbaraMyslinski.com 860-883-2099



Middletown \$375,000
Distinctive 3BR/3+BA unit-perfect for entertaining! Upgraded kitchen w/granite & ss apps, oversized Trex deck & sunroom. 1st fl master suite, gas heat. Discover great looks as well as great living!
SaraFelter.net 860-573-8008



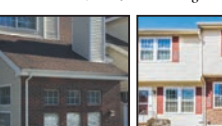
Middletown \$284,900
A charming ambiance comes w/this 3BR/2.5BA Colonial w/a fantastic cul-de-sac location! Relax in the formal living room w/FP. Large updated kitchen, mastersuite & private deck. Superb layout and style!
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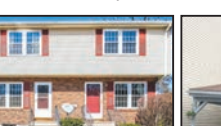
Middletown \$272,500
Life is enhanced in this 3BR/2BA Cape. Terrific home providing updated kitchen/bath, HW floors and enclosed sun room. Largest lot in the sub-division w/a fenced-in area. Oversized deck, 2-car garage.
LizzRomano.com 860-760-8067



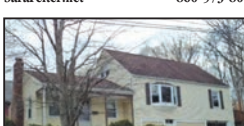
Middletown \$128,000
Hurry to see this engaging 2BR/2BA end unit condo. Newly renovated including fresh paint and updated kitchen/baths. Open floor plan with cathedral ceilings. Resort like complex & conveniently located.
Kathy Dellaquila 860-559-0825



Middletown \$124,900
Upkeep is so easy in this freshly painted 2BR/1.5BA condo. Ideal offerings such as living/dining combo, great sized BRs & partially finished basement. Newer insulated windows. Priced right & so nice!
HelenKrzyszynski.com 860-205-7063



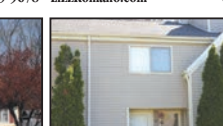
Middletown \$112,500
Upkeep is a breeze in this cheerful 4BR/1.5BA Townhouse. Fine home offering partially finished basement, laundry in unit and pets allowed. Carport, community pool. Come add your personal touches!
DickPeplau.com 860-463-2288



New Britain \$187,000
Discover the flair of this pristine 3BR/2BA Cape Cod! Charming details such as beamed, cathedral ceilings, hardwood flooring and fireplace. Partially finished basement, huge living room and garage.
WayneHorgan.com 860-760-8044



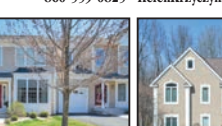
New Britain \$155,000
Make yourself at home in this welcoming 3BR Cape Cod on a big, fenced lot. First floor master, eat-in kitchen & attached garage. Spacious bedrooms, wood burning stove. A home offering real value.
Alisa Orzolek 860-209-5174



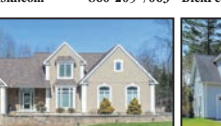
Cromwell \$157,000
Look into this desirable 2BR/2BA condo at Oxford Park. Finished basement, roomy bedrooms & HW flooring. Can add personal touches outside unit as well. Complex offers clubhouse, swimming pool & tennis.
MaureenHorowitz.com 860-205-9678



Berlin \$279,900
Welcome the good life in this impeccable 2BR/2+BA condo. Among its features are 1st fl master with vaulted ceilings, 2-story great rm with a wall of windows & kitchen w/granite & sliders to Trex deck.
SaraFelter.net 860-573-8008



Southington \$594,900
Combine elegance with function in this exceptional open floor plan 4BR/2+BA two-story. A gracious lifestyle, w/main fl Jmaster suite, soaring ceilings & modern updated kitchen w/granite. 9-car garage.
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Southington \$524,900
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Wethersfield LIFE

June 2016

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QUOTE OF NOTE:

“There is tremendous energy and passion in Wethersfield around the issue of hunger.”

- Beatrice Maslowski

See story page 17

ON THE COVER

Mary Lawrence offers alternative and holistic health guidance for anyone interested in living a vegan life. Her services include wellness coaching, yoga, meditation and plant-based nutrition instruction.

Photo by Lisa Brisson
See story page 14

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Photo by Mark Jahne

Mark Rudewicz of Wethersfield is the animal control officer with the Simsbury Police Department. He also operates a private wildlife control business called Timber Trail Wildlife and Animal Services, LLC.

He knows his critters

Mark Rudewicz spends his days dealing with bears, coyotes and other wildlife

by Mark Jahne
Editor

A typical day for Mark Rudewicz, if there is such a thing, involves keeping track of the growing bear population in the Farmington Valley. It's his job to make sure that animals and people safely coexist.

Rudewicz, a longtime Wethersfield resident, is the animal control officer with the Simsbury Police Department. He also operates a private nuisance wildlife removal business called Timber Trail Wildlife and Animal Services, LLC.

Before taking on this position, he worked for the Hartford Police Department for 22 years, retiring at the rank of lieutenant. He wasn't involved with bears back then but did have a hand in various matters related to animals.

"I was the supervisor of the canine unit and the mounted unit. I was an active rider," he said. "I've always had an interest in animals and wildlife."

He also commanded street crime and crime suppression units. Now he is considered one of the leading experts in Central Connecticut on bears and wildlife, often teaching officers in other departments and at the training academy how to handle such calls.

"Coyotes are in abundance, as is your black bear population," he said while driving around Simsbury in a police department truck. "We have bobcats and coyotes in Wethersfield. Right now the coyotes are very active."

Even wild turkeys can be aggressive toward humans. He said Connecticut has 14 species of snakes and two, rattlesnakes and copperheads, are poisonous. They are not

native to this town.

"The most common one I deal with is the black rat snakes," he said.

While not venomous, they can be aggressive and can inflict a painful bite.

Rudewicz has been on the job in Simsbury for 11 years. He patrols areas known to be common ground for bears or neighborhoods where they were recently spotted. Residents call the police station to report bear sightings.

He said there are an estimated 14 to 18 bears who call that town home. They include two huge males, three sows and several yearlings and cubs. They tend to stay within a range of 35 square miles.

He talked about the reforestation that has occurred in this part of the state over the decades. That created plenty of woods and along with it an inviting habitat for animals that were rarely, if ever, seen prior to that.

The Farmington Valley is full of bears. Only on rare occasions do they wander as far as Wethersfield, although at least two have been

spotted here over the past few years.

One of them poked around the general area of the Wethersfield Country Club for a while. It was spotted one Saturday in the parking lot of the Church of the Incarnation on Prospect Street and worshippers about to leave following the 5 p.m. mass were required to remain in the building for their own safety until it moved on.

Daily rounds for Rudewicz take him through state parks and wildlife management areas, ideal terrain for a variety of wild animals. When calls come in from residents who have spotted a bear he drives to those locations to make sure everyone is safe.

Most of the time people watch from a distance and the bears simply go about their business, eventually wandering back into the woods. If he perceives a threat he will chase them away using sprays, noise-making devices or non-lethal projectiles such as bean bags and rubber rounds.

"It's aversion conditioning management. I want to keep them on edge a little, suspicious of



Photos courtesy of Mark Rudewicz

This bear was foraging for food and found a container of whipped cream in a trash can.



Maria Santos, M.D.
Cardiology

Saint Francis Welcomes Maria Santos, M.D.

Dr. Santos, a specialist in cardiology, has joined the medical staff at Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center.

Dr. Santos received her medical degree from University of the Philippines Manila College of Medicine and completed her residency in internal medicine at the University of Connecticut Health Center. She went on to fellowship training in cardiology, also at UConn Health Center.

A member of Cottage Grove Cardiology, Dr. Santos is board certified in internal medicine, general cardiology, adult echocardiography, nuclear cardiology and vascular interpretation.

You can learn more about Dr. Santos, or any of the more than 700 accomplished physicians on our medical staff, by visiting stfranciscare.com or calling 1-877-STFRANCIS (1-877-783-7262).



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humans," he said.

Sometimes merely hollering at them will do the trick. They ignore the commands of other officers, but when Rudewicz shows up and tells them to scram, they comply.

"A lot of them know my voice," he said.

Another part of his job is to make sure people stay a safe distance away. He offers the following advice for anyone who may encounter a bear.

"If you come across a bear, remain calm and back away," he said.

Do not run. That will only motivate the bear to chase you and black bears can run as fast as 30 miles per hour for short distances. It's also a good idea to make noise and try to look large by opening your coat wide or spreading your arms.

"I've been bull-charged [by bears] countless times. They'll give you a warning," Rudewicz said.

It's a bad sign if a bear emits low groans or starts to pat its feet on the ground. Walk away calmly before it becomes more agitated. The typical

black bear weighs around 300 pounds – some grow much larger – and stands as high as 7 feet tall when on its hind legs.

Barking dogs can agitate a bear so it's important to get them in the house and out of harm's way if a bear is in the vicinity. Humans are not part of a bear's diet so they are not looking at them as food. They are wild animals and don't want to interact with people if possible.

Rudewicz said the best way to deter bears is to deny them the food sources that draw them to places occupied by people. They eat food garbage, pet food left outside – this also attracts animals such as skunks, possums and raccoons – even the grease remaining on a barbecue grill.

Yogi Bear liked picnic baskets. Real-life bears crave birdseed and will tear feeders apart to get at it. They will also enter an open garage if there is a bucket of bird seed or other food inside. A bear wandering in an area inhabited by people is simply foraging for food.

They need to pack on as much

as 100 pounds each spring and summer to tide them over during hibernation. Despite their size, Rudewicz remains impressed by their agility and strength.

"They can shinny up a 60-foot tree in seconds," he said. "Your black bears are the best climbers in the bear population."

Some people have been known to put out food for bears and coyotes, Rudewicz said. That's a bad idea. These are potentially dangerous wild animals, not pets.

He said it's important to know that mating season is underway. That means mother bears will be caring for cubs from June until next February and they are famous for being aggressively protective of their young. Young bears commonly stay with their mother for two winters before setting out on their own.

He added it's not practical to relocate bears every time one is spotted in a residential neighborhood or farm. After all, the animals didn't do anything wrong, and it is possible for humans and bears to live side by side.

"In Connecticut, we don't have a bear problem, we have a people problem," Rudewicz said.

Every day is different. There are days when not a single bear is spotted in Simsbury and its environs. Other days can result in multiple calls from residents and businesses.

For example, this writer spent part of two days riding with Rudewicz hoping to see a bear in the wild. It didn't happen, but the next morning he had a bear call as soon as he arrived at work and was able to get a close-up photo of the animal crossing the street in a residential neighborhood.

"There are days I've had as many as 14 bear calls," he said.

At least half of those turn up empty for him because the bear has moved on and is back in the woods or brush. **WL**

To contact Timber Trail Wildlife and Animal Services, LLC call 860-995-8957. Mark Rudewicz is also the author of a book entitled "Paws, Claws & Tales of Animal Control." It is available on Amazon.com.

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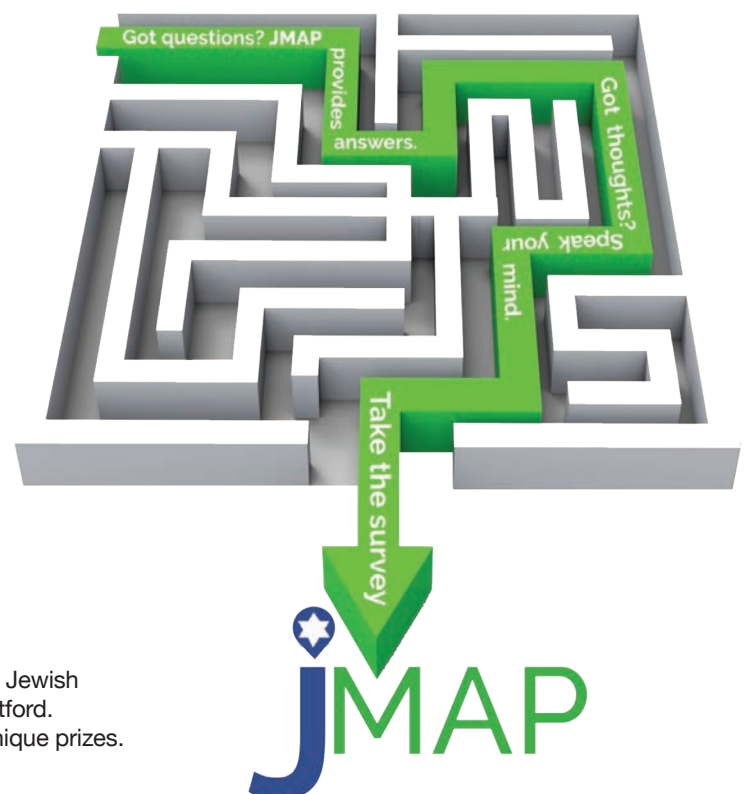
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Bring on the funk

WHS students create a jazzy and rocking band named Fever

by Mark Jahne
Editor

They formed in the classic tradition of a 1960s garage band, a group of teenagers with a common interest in music. But once they start playing listeners soon realize there is nothing common about them.

The eight Wethersfield High School students who make up the band Fever all have extensive musical experience and talent. They have used that to create a tight sound that covers a wide range of musical genres and artists.

Just look at their play list. One will find Etta James, Elvis Presley, James Brown, The Beatles, Jaco

Pastorius, The Commodores, Tower of Power, Bruce Springsteen, Van Morrison, Sam and Dave, Stevie Wonder and modern artists such as Bruno Mars and Daft Punk.

Another unusual feature is that the typical garage band is heavy on guitar players. This band has a horn section.

A what?

Yes, a horn section. After all, you can't do justice to James Brown and Tower of Power without one. It also helps to set them apart.

They are already gaining local notoriety and being hired for paid performances. The band played live



Photos by Mark Jahne

The members of Fever include, back from left, Zach Martin, Nick Kallajian, Casey Urso and Dalis Irizarry; front, Eric Stefano, Josh Machado and Jack Breton.

music for the volunteer fire department's April wine tasting evening. They performed in May at the outdoor amphitheater at Blue Back Square in West Hartford.

Fever is scheduled to perform

June 4 at the town's annual fireworks show at Cove Park sponsored by the Wethersfield Chamber of Commerce.

Members are: Jack Breton, guitar; Dalis Irizarry, lead vocals; Nick Kallajian, saxophones; Josh



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Machado, drums; Zach Martin, bass guitar; Aiden Sitler, alto saxophone; Eric Stefano, piano and Casey Urso, trumpet. They practice in the basement of Casey's home.

"We've all known each other through marching band," Josh said. "We've gotten more offers for shows. We went from jazz to funk. It's fun to make a little money for something that's not like work."

They also do rock 'n' roll and pop music. Some of them performed at last year's Cornfest. Fever has already become more popular than any of them expected.

"The gigs [where] we don't get paid are the ones we get experience for," Nick said.

"It's just a lot of fun," Eric added.

"Every gig we have we learn things that are better than others," Josh said. "People don't expect us to do what we do."

"People say they like us for our variety," Casey said. "We can look up a live version and put our own spin on that. Outside of the band we all play different instruments."

Fever played during lunch period one day at school and received a lot of positive feedback from fellow students. The band has become so accomplished that if someone misses a note, the others quickly pick him up.

"Everyone here is in the jazz band, the marching band, the concert band. We design the set list to get progressively funkier," Jack said. "We arrange the songs and write the parts by ear."

Some had no desire to join a band but decided to give it a try. Dalis, the only girl, was one of them.

"They asked me to sing one song and I wasn't sure about it," she said. "We're really close friends. This band brings us closer together."

Some of the songs are particularly challenging for her but she belts them out with passion and confidence. At least a few of the members are contemplating careers in the music industry.

"I'm going to college to study jazz saxophone," Nick said.

"I want to go into the audio engineering part of it," Jack added.

"My parents used to be professional musicians. They met in a band," Casey said. **WL**

To learn more about the band, or to schedule a performance, call 860-716-0637, email fever-bandwethersfield@gmail.com, or see FeverCT on Facebook.



Dalis Irizarry, the only girl in the group, is the lead vocalist.



Casey Urso and Nick Kallajian make up two-thirds of the horn section.

LIFE

in the classroom

Webb School students show off their hip-hop dance skills

by Mark Jahne
Editor

Dance is great exercise. Just ask the students and faculty at Webb School. A standing-room-only crowd turned out the afternoon of May 12 for a hip-hop dance presentation in the school gym. It was the culmination of several days of classes led by Austin Dailey of Red Supreme Productions and his sidekick Pop Tart.

This is the third year such a program was held and the crowd grows each time. Principal Michael Verderame said Dailey's program serves as a different type of physical education class.

"He spends four days and he focuses all of it on health, wellness, flexibility, stretching. He uses dance moves to teach the kids about that," he said.



Photos by Mark Jahne

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"The turnout is tremendous, the kids love it and the energy is very high," Verderame said as he squeezed into the hot and crowded gym.

The week of hip-hop was intentionally scheduled as a break between two weeks of the new Smarter Balanced Assessment

Consortium standardized tests. SBAC replaced the Connecticut Mastery Test and this is the first year schools throughout the state will be graded on their performance.

"The Keane Foundation paid for the whole thing," he said of Dailey's program. **WL**



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New event debuts

Mayor's Charity Ball will raise money for town food bank

by Mark Jahne
Editor

Some of the best ideas are those that are borrowed from others who have enjoyed great success with them. That's exactly what the organizers of the new Mayor's Charity Ball are doing.

The inaugural gala evening planned for 6 p.m. June 3 at

Wethersfield Country Club will be a black tie optional affair. In addition to dinner, there will be dancing, a raffle and a live auction. The long-term intent is to raise money for charitable causes.

The hope is that this will become an annual event. Community leaders in West

Hartford started a Mayor's Charity Ball 17 years ago and it has raised tens of thousands of dollars for various local charities over that time.

The event's design is that the sitting mayor is one of the two co-chairmen and the other chairman comes from the planning committee. This first year's duo is Mayor Paul

Montinieri and Ken Lesser, a resident who works at UBS Financial Services.

This affair is specifically designed as a nonpartisan and non-political night out. All interested residents and business leaders are encouraged to participate.

This year's designated recipient is the Wethersfield Food Bank. Gala organizers noted that 13 percent of all residents live at, near, or below the poverty level and need this program.

The percentage of children receiving free and reduced-prize lunches in the Wethersfield Public Schools has doubled over the past 10



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years town-wide and tripled in certain individual schools.

It's not just children who are in need. Town officials report that the number of senior citizens using the food bank this past year rose by 12 percent.

In addition to Montinieri and Lesser, committee members include Cindy Greenblatt, Kate Eastwood, Michael Stefano, Renee DeNino and Patti Morytko. The ball committee is working in conjunction with the Wethersfield Hunger Action Team, affiliated with Foodshare.

Beatrice Maslowski, community network builder, is that agency's liaison. She is confident that the event will be a rousing success.

"It's the passion and the energy. This is a generous community. All we need to do is let them know about the problem," she said.

"It's a wonderful cause. I was very surprised what the Wethersfield statistics are for hunger," Morytko said. "It's really community awareness ... it could be any of us if we lose our jobs."

"If you grew up in Wethersfield,

you don't recognize it," Stefano added.

"My husband's involved in the hunger action team," Greenblatt said.

She added that schoolchildren need to eat in order to be able to learn.

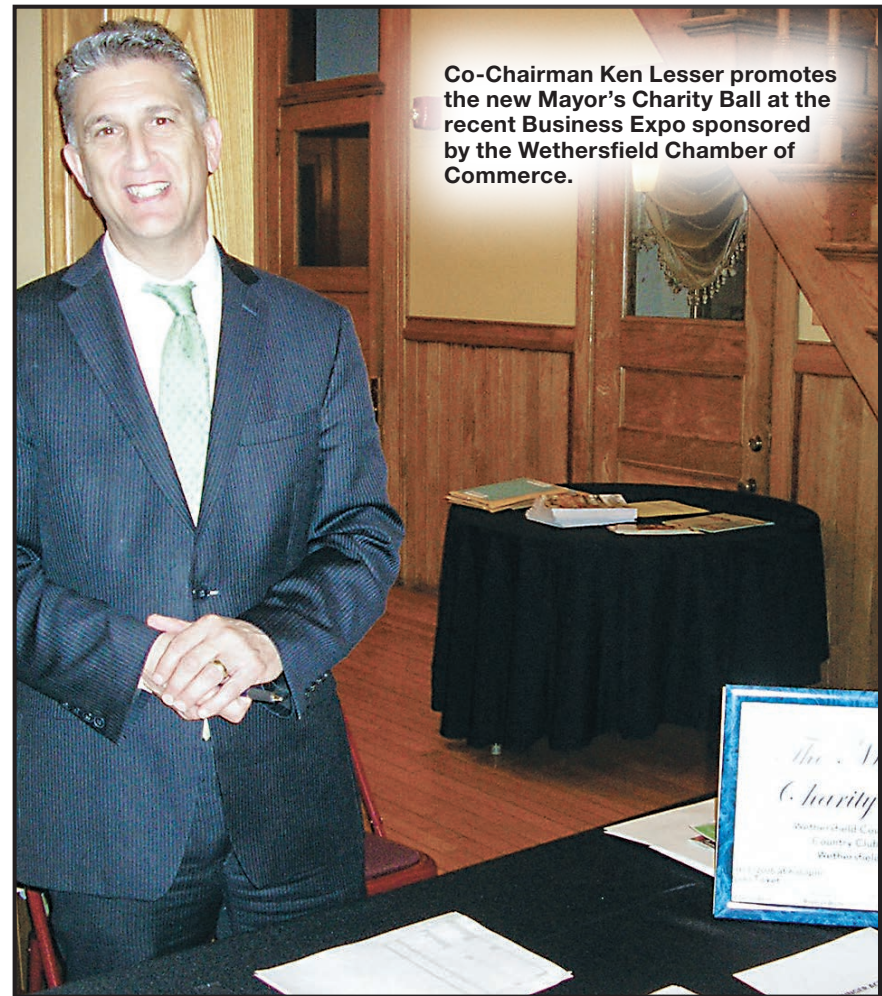
"Being a mom of little kids, it kind of hits home for me," Eastwood said.

"All these trends are up. That's the problem," Lesser said.

Because the new ball is not yet certified as an official nonprofit organization for tax-exempt purposes, the Richard M. Keane Foundation is providing support in that area.

Tickets are priced at \$75 per person and the goal is to sell out all 180 seats. Another way the event will raise funds is through sponsorships. Opportunities ranging from \$250 to \$2,500 are available and those who choose to become sponsors will be recognized with signs at the event, as well as in the program booklet. **WL**

Several sponsors have already committed their support. For tickets or sponsorship information call Cindy Greenblatt at 860-563-6762.



Co-Chairman Ken Lesser promotes the new Mayor's Charity Ball at the recent Business Expo sponsored by the Wethersfield Chamber of Commerce.



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Promoting health and harmony

Mary Lawrence wants to share the benefits of a vegan lifestyle

by Mark Jahne
Editor

Mary Lawrence is convinced that the key to health is a plant-based diet. She is now openly sharing that concept with others through her new Ahimsa Health & Harmony.

The Hartford all-vegan wellness center is, according to Lawrence, the only one of its kind in the state. The Wethersfield resident, personal chef and entrepreneur sees it as a natural extension of the Buddhist principal of ahimsa, which is practicing nonviolence in oneself and with all other living beings.

It's all about unity. Her emphasis is on the connection between people, animals and the planet. Once one accepts that philosophy, the idea of eating animals, or the products they produce, no longer appeals.

All of the products and services she offers at her Arbor Street wellness center in the city's Parkville section are 100 percent vegan. Her goal is to teach people about making connections between their food choices and overall well being.

The basic concept is that everyone has the ability to manage their own health if given the proper tools.

Lawrence, who holds the title of executive director of Ahimsa Health & Harmony, has been teaching and counseling people about the vegan lifestyle since 1997. Her center offers wellness coaching, plant-based nutrition instruction, yoga, meditation, art and nature therapy, and other holistic healing modalities.

She has more than a decade of managing a vegan personal chef business called Well on Wheels that has helped her clients recover from such health problems as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, irritable bowel syndrome, multiple sclerosis, celiac disease, asthma, obesity and food addiction.

Well on Wheels features private lessons, group classes, cooking parties, intimate catering, corporate events, culinary tours and more. All of her meals are made from organic whole foods that are entirely plant based.

She grew up in Wethersfield, moved to New Haven and then returned. Lawrence teaches on a part-time basis at Gateway

Community College in that city.

"I'm glad to be back," she said.

She works with people of all ages to share what she learned while regaining her own health after overcoming decades of chronic illness. She trained at the National Gourmet Institute and earned a certificate in plant-based nutrition from the Dr. T. Colin Campbell Institute at Cornell University.

"I originally changed my diet 18 years ago for health reasons. Everything I was eating was the same food everyone else was eating," she said. "I was kind of a junk food vegetarian in college."

A naturopathic physician helped her to change all that. Lawrence stopped eating processed foods such as dairy products, coffee, refined flour and refined sugar. She also deleted anything made from wheat because it is an inflammatory.

She ceased eating meat, even though it is a source of protein, which is an important nutritional ingredient. Her health improved so much that even the allergy she had

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to her dog went away.

"There are complete proteins in the plant-based world," she said.

The change meant she had to almost completely relearn how to cook. It took her three months to detox her body and change her way of eating and living.

"My main motivating factor was my dog," she said.

One of the advantages she discovered is that more supermarkets now offer a selection of vegan and organic products. She flirted with the idea of opening a restaurant but decided to pursue a different career path.

"I started teaching adult education classes in West Hartford. I never anticipated it becoming my business," Lawrence said.

She took some cooking classes at Whole Foods Market and decided to become a vegan personal chef. She also decided to open Ahimsa. It's a Sanskrit word that means "do no harm."

"The last few years I've been growing my clientele," she said. "People are curious, they want to know more. Managing stress is a key component of what I do."

It's not just about food, it's about animals and plants and unity with all living beings. She said some people struggle at first with the concept

that it's not all about themselves.

"It's a spectrum of education. The more you learn, the more you find out how everything is connected," Lawrence said.

Two classes offered at her wellness center are Planting and Chef's Kitchen Garden. They use only vegan fertilizers, no manure or other animal components.

Wise Women Wednesdays cover women's health and other issues. She also conducts day-long retreats. More than 500 people have signed up for her health and wellness vegan group.

She speaks at conferences all over the country and is a frequent guest on radio and television programs. Her other education credentials are a B.A. degree in English from the University of Connecticut and an M.A. degree in communication from the University of Hartford.

She appears on vegan cooking shows on WWLP-TV in Springfield and Nutmeg TV, a Farmington Valley cable access network.

"I do a vegan Thanksgiving at my house," she said.

Lawrence is the author of "Easy Peasy Vegan Eats: Healthy Cooking for Busy Peeps," one of two cookbooks she has authored. It offers a wide variety of information and advice about the vegan lifestyle as



Photo by Mark Jahne

Mary Lawrence offers her expertise on all things vegan. She is a counselor, personal chef and wellness teacher, all from the vegan perspective.

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well as numerous recipes for such things as salads, soups, sauces, appetizers, entrees and desserts.

It describes ways to make “egg-less” egg salad, quiche, pizza, mousse and chocolate chip cookies, all without using any animal products. She hopes that the book will help people solve their food questions as they transition to a healthier diet.

“When you first make the transition you feel like you’re bombarded with questions,” she said.

Dining out can be a challenge but she said more restaurants are offering vegetarian and vegan meals. She advises checking out their menus online to see how many options exist.

The vegan lifestyle is not a diet. It’s a healthier way of eating and living. It’s also not a quick fix for health issues. That’s why she provides counseling and helps clients determine goals and establish action steps.

“The motivating factor is really important when people make a change. It’s easy when you have a support system,” she said.

“I’d like to think that my well-

“My palate changed. I was able to detect the subtle flavors in food.”

Mary Lawrence

ness center is a model for the future for people who want to change their lives. Wellness Jump Start is one of my popular programs.”

She performs a comprehensive health history and analysis with her clients. They discuss diet, setting goals, and how to completely overhaul what is in the pantry and refrigerator.

“I customize a meal plan based on what their goals are.”

She also works with schools to encourage them to add vegan items to their menus. Lawrence added there is a growing trend of vegan eating for athletes.

“When you’re eating whole foods, especially vegetables and fruits, you can eat as much as you want,” she said. “I always emphasize a wide variety of foods” including oils, seeds and nuts.

Another benefit of vegan cuisine is that a person’s taste buds change for the better.

“My palate changed. I was able to detect the subtle flavors in food,” she said.

Lawrence is planning to lead a vegan culinary tour of Hartford either June 4 or 11; check her website for details.

“Mary is a skilled chef who never ceases to amaze me with her talent for creating flavorful and visually beautiful food that stimulates all of the senses. She truly cooks with love. She’s completely spoiled me for eating in restaurants because her food is always better than anything I can get anywhere else,” client Sandy Resnick said.

“She also is extremely thoughtful about the world and our relationship with other living things. She’s a

talented educator who is able to craft her message to a wide range of audiences,” Resnick added.

“When I met Mary I was not vegan, but ate dairy and eggs. She had a very gentle way of answering my questions about veganism and why she chose not to consume animal products.

“Knowing her has changed my life for the better, as I now believe that I live a life that is consistent with my values of kindness and non-violence. Mary truly embodies these values,” Resnick said.

“Mary Lawrence caters to seasoned vegans and beginners alike, with an artful array of masterfully flavorful, yet easy, recipes sure to knock your socks off,” Maribeth Adams said.

She is a director of the North American Vegetarian Society. **WL**

Ahimsa Health & Harmony is located at 56 Arbor St., Suite 417 in Hartford. It is open Thursday through Sunday by appointment. To learn more call 860-985-1645, see ahimsa-healthandharmony.com or visit its Facebook page.

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Community sets out to fight hunger

Members of new action team come from a variety of backgrounds

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

Those who are concerned about hunger in the community might want to try a HAT. Not the latest fashion in headwear, HAT is an acronym for Hunger Action Team and represents a community-wide effort to end hunger in a designated community or region.

The Wethersfield program is coordinated by Foodshare and is one of 19 active HATs in the area. The group has been meeting monthly since this past October.

"They are doing incredible work for a new HAT, with task teams in place to address their four locally identified critical concerns," Beatrice Maslowski, community network builder for Foodshare, said.

Those four areas are: increasing food pantry storage, collections and access; community building and education; publicity and social media; and increasing SNAP [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program] and free/reduced school

meal participation.

"There is tremendous energy and passion in Wethersfield around the issue of hunger. We have over 70 people on our HAT distribution and 20 regularly attend our monthly meetings. Wethersfield is a generous community and people will help when asked," Maslowski said.

HAT members are a combination of residents, business owners, town officials and representatives from nonprofit organizations.

"It's people who are passionate and want to help those in need, a group of people who are coming together to help those in need to make sure no one is going hungry," town social worker Christina Morra-Tiu said.

"There are a lot of myths about poverty or the working poor. It's great we can pull our resources together and educate each other and [see] where the trends are going as to where the need is," she added.

"Hunger reaches every age



Photo by Mara Dresner

Erica Teixeira, assistant director of the town Department of Social and Youth Services, left, and Christina Morra-Tiu, a social worker, appreciate how the community is coming together to fight hunger. They're standing in the town's food pantry.

group, every race, every culture that we have. [At the] food bank, we see senior citizens, we see young families and everyone in between."

Erica Teixeira, assistant director of the town Department of Social and Youth Services, noted that many people who need food assistance are employed.

"A lot of families are working really hard. They're working two jobs, sometimes three jobs, and they just can't meet those basic needs," she said.

"Foodshare also brought to our attention that of the people eligible to receive SNAP benefits [in Wethersfield], only about between 60 and 64 percent actually apply. Is it they don't know they qualify? Is there a disconnect with the paperwork? That leaves a lot of families not getting that assistance right now."

"We're concerned about that 40 percent that would qualify and want to figure out why [they haven't applied]," Morra-Tiu said.

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Texeira added that she'd eventually like to see 90 percent utilization.

"I know that's not going to happen overnight," she said.

She also said about 21 percent of households in town are what is known as ALICE (asset-limited, income constrained, employed) families.

"These are people who are working, but not making ends meet. [They're asking], 'Do I pay for car insurance or put food on table?' This is people's real life. There are tough decisions that have to be made."

Not everyone who uses the services, such as the food bank, needs them long term.

"Sometimes it's situational, someone loses their job and will come to us and utilize us for three to six months. We've had clients who have had some large surgery and are out on short-term disability and are having trouble making ends meet," Morra-Tiu said.

About 150 households use the food bank each month. Teixeira said they give out an average of 2,700 pounds of food monthly. Much of it is nonperishable, although they also have some items that need refrigeration or to be kept frozen.

They also try to keep on hand toiletries including toothbrushes and toothpaste, diapers, soap, tampons and adult diapers, as well as toilet paper, dish and laundry detergent, and cleaning supplies. Her department is concerned about making the experience comfortable for people.

"We bring people into the food

"There is tremendous energy and passion in Wethersfield around the issue of hunger."

Beatrice Maslowski

bank by appointment. People appreciate that. This gives people a little more sense of confidentiality and privacy. There's not as much of a stigma," Teixeira said.

"It gives them an opportunity to talk to their social workers about anything that's going on, anything we can assist them with as far as resources. We started offering late hours twice a month to help families and individuals who are working. Our normal hours are 8 o'clock to 4:30. On the first and third Thursday, we stay until 6."

Starting in June, the department will be on summer hours, closing at 1 p.m. on Fridays and staying open every Thursday until 6 p.m.

"I hate to hear someone say, 'I'm coming in for energy assistance, but I have to take time off from work,'" Morra-Tiu said.

Additionally, Mobile Foodshare comes to town every other Wednesday, serving 90 to 95 people.

"The idea of Mobile Foodshare is to make sure people in need get fresh food and vegetables, because they tend to be more expensive at the grocery store," Morra-Tiu said.

"It's so helpful for people. We have an open site. It's not just open to Wethersfield residents, it's open to

everybody. We don't take any of their information. We really don't even have to know your name if you don't want to."

She said people are eager to volunteer for Mobil Foodshare, which comes from 9-9:30 a.m. on selected dates.

"A lot of times volunteers who work Mobile Foodshare also use it. They like the fact they can help the community and then get help themselves. If we're short staffed, anyone on the line will help us," Morra-Tiu said.

The members of the new HAT are from all aspects of the community. They meet the second Friday of each month from 1:30-3 p.m. at the Pitkin Community Center.

"I've utilized the food banks in town, I'm a SNAP recipient and my children have used the school food lunch program, while navigating food allergies and trying to maintain a fairly balanced whole food diet. I felt I had a unique perspective to offer," HAT member Lynn Ofori said.

"Being low income or having temporary crisis neither means your kids shouldn't have occasional sweets, nor that they can rely solely on high sugar, fat and calorie processed foods that seem inexpensive.

There have been recent articles and news reports of the growing hunger problem in the suburbs, something Foodshare and the HAT members are acutely aware of, but some of the public may still not be, or that hunger has many faces, including working families, children and seniors," she added.

"For a variety of socioeconomic reasons, parents working multiple jobs and seniors who worked all their lives can still struggle to make ends meet, and since only so much can be done about constant bills or medication costs, the food budget is often targeted.

"However, we also know that poor nutrition can cause or exacerbate chronic illness, so it's not a cost savings in the long run. So part of the program is educating community members about the problem. Then you can work on solutions."

Those solutions include the change in hours at the town's food bank. Ofori appreciates the importance of fresh, healthy food, and what's available from the town and church food banks.

"I'd like to see even more fresh food products and whole food offerings, as well as education around eating healthier on a limited budget. Also, we are working on increasing participation in SNAP and the school breakfast and lunch for eligible families, by identifying and addressing barriers to utilization, so our kids can learn to their best potential on nourished bellies," she said. **WL**

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Summer

Life

SPECIAL SECTION OF
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Getting your GOLF ON

Tips on making the most of the season

by **Nancy Thompson and
Alicia B. Smith**
Staff Writers

There's nothing like the green of summer, unless it's the "greens" of summer on area golf courses. Once considered to be a game for the elite, golf's appeal has expanded to youths, seniors and players who don't get out often.

Professionals at courses in the area are always looking to attract new golfers and to help their players enhance their skills and add to their enjoyment of the game.

In Glastonbury, Jim Tennant, the PGA professional at Minnechaug Golf Course, is working to encourage golfers of all ages and ability levels to enjoy the game at the nine-hole course. He understands what the course is and what it isn't, and has helped make the par-35 Minnechaug course a place where people who are learning to play, women and older golfers feel welcome and respected.

Dan Butler, director of golf at Tower Ridge Country Club in Simsbury, suggests golfers look over their equipment to ensure they have what is needed and update outdated

equipment. "Technology is changing the game," Butler said.

Once out on the course, Butler suggested that golfers find a place where they feel comfortable. "Play the right set of tees," he said. "Don't go all the way back in the tee boxes."

As tempting as it is to head to the local course, Ryan Kane, manager at Rolling Greens Golf Club in Rocky Hill, suggested that every player, regardless of skill level, take some time at a driving range.

"You want to stay positive when playing golf," Kane

said. "It's definitely better to shake the cobwebs off and practice a little bit."

New to the game?

Our experts encourage brand-new golfers to take lessons. "It could be a group lesson or a private lesson, but it doesn't have to be one-on-one," Tennant said. "New golfers need to learn enough fundamentals to enjoy themselves out there." He often suggests that beginners play later in the

day, even at twilight, when the course is less

crowded and they will be less stressed. "Don't come Saturday morning," he said.

Rich Crowe, golf pro at Rockledge Golf Club in West Hartford, agreed. "For somebody getting into the sport, taking lessons early on would be something I would encourage them to do," he said.

Butler agreed, suggesting that lessons from a professional would serve a new golfer well.

Golf equipment doesn't need to be a budget-buster.

"You don't have to spend an outrageous amount of money," Butler said. "I don't think anyone personally should spend full retail on golf equipment. It's outrageous, the cost. There are plenty of places who sell used or new equipment at a discounted price."

Kane suggested that once new golfers have a feel for how to hit the ball, they can try an executive course, a par-3 shorter course, before trying their luck at a longer 18-hole. "Play with your friends so you can get the proper etiquette and pace of play," he said.

John Tatakis III is the manager at Connecticut Golf Academy, which has a driving range and practice space for putting and chipping and



Making the most of your green fees

Green fees vary by course and often by day and time. Here are some suggestions from the professionals for getting the most for your money.

Look for deals. Some courses offer season passes. Discounts are often available on the course's website.

Show up a half-hour early so you can practice a few putts. That way you won't spend the first few holes getting used to the game.

If you're open to playing any time, play on off-peak days and hours.

The Golf Now app, which Minnechaug Golf Course and many others in the area use, may offer discounts such as a reduced fee for nine holes with a cart or two rounds for the price of one.

Summer LIFE

other elements of the short game. He suggested that new golfers start at a driving range and sign up for lessons to learn the fundamentals.

Weekend warrior?

Weekend golfers should plan ahead and book a tee time in advance so they're not disappointed when they arrive or are shut out of playing altogether. "Every course has a little different policy," Tennant said. "There's an app for Android and iPhone that lets people book tee times seven days in advance."

Kane also suggested booking tee times in advance. "If you are playing a course for the first time check out their website, look at the course layout so you know what you are up against, especially on a course where it is the first time you play," he said.

Crowe recommended finding time to practice parts of the game. This could be a half-hour at the Rockledge driving range or some time on its practice putting green or at West Hartford's 9-hole course, Buena Vista Golf Course.

"Buena Vista is a little more laid back," Crowe said. "A lot of beginners go out of there. It's a little bit shorter, easier to get around."

Practicing at home is an option as well, Butler said.

"You can find 10 to 15 minutes a day to hit some putts in the living room or swing in front of a mirror," he said. "You don't have to be playing golf to get better at playing golf."

Tatakis said a nine-hole or executive

course would be good for golfers who won't have time to play as often as they'd like and also enable players to get a good handle on their game before they go on to an 18-hole course.

The regulars

Tennant said daily or almost-daily golfers tend to play the same course and know when the quiet times are. They also may have a relationship with the staff, which can be important. "The staff and the golfers get to really know each other," he said. "We will always bend over backward for that regular customer."

Keeping in shape is important.

Crowe often suggests that golfers work out in the winter, and focus on stretching, all of which will help when the season starts in the spring.

He said it's a good idea to come to the course about a half hour before their tee time to have a chance to do some stretching, hit a few balls on the driving range and practice putting before teeing off for good.

"If you are playing on a daily basis, it's all about having fun," Butler said. "It's only a game. No matter what happens on a golf course, the course is going to stay

there and you are the one who played bad. Remember, it's only a game and you can always come back to it."

Kane said regular golfers can look around for a golf league because playing with a group often provides motivation.

Tatakis likes variety. "I would suggest people try different types of courses, different layouts rather than playing the same course over and over," he said.

Get 'em while they're young

Many young golfers are introduced to the sport through their parents or grandparents.

Crowe suggested letting young children hit balls on the driving range or watch golfers practice rather than starting lessons too soon.

"It needs to be fun for them," he said, adding that West Hartford offers a number of learning opportunities for youngsters to learn the sport, including summer programs.

Tatakis believes children who have expressed an interest in learning the sport would benefit from a group lesson. "That definitely helps their experience," he said.

Once a child has expressed interest in the sport, parents should invest in a set of junior clubs, a bet-

ter option then cutting down a set of clubs that once belonged to an adult. "It's going to be easier for the child to strike the ball and get the ball in the air," Crowe said.

Butler has seen children as young as 3 get started in the game, but warned that parents should not press their children to take up the sport.

If children take a serious interest in the game, then parents can consider purchasing a junior set of clubs. "Kids having their own set of clubs, that is the right fit, is only going to benefit them," he said.

"My father put a golf club in my hand, I think I was 3 years old," Kane said, adding that it is not uncommon to start children in the sport at such a young age.

The younger they are, Kane said, the better opportunity they will have to develop their own natural swing.

"You can play golf your entire life, at every level, at every age," he said.

Tennant said young golfers also like to know when the quiet times are.

"If they don't, they might want to check with the staff to find out when the best time for them to play would be," he said, adding that, while public courses are less expensive than private facilities, that doesn't mean they're easier.

"It's best to ask," he said, adding that Minnechaug is considered to be user-friendly. "Some can be really intimidating." **WL**



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Summer **LIFE**

The crops are ready at The Pickin' Patch in Avon. Christopher Carville, owner/farm manager, says that strawberries and pumpkins are the most popular to pick.

Finding

Summer's treasures

Courtesy photo



The Desmarais family of Glastonbury is a frequent visitor to pick your own farms. Here Josephine, then 2 ½, and Allison, then 4, enjoy picking apples. The girls are now 10 and 11.

by **Mara Dresner and Allie Rivera**
Staff Writers

With the temperatures rising and the days feeling brighter, outdoor family-friendly activities quickly become a preferable option. Throughout the region are a wide variety of activities that will get families off the couch, out the door and enjoying nature in a fun, safe and collaborative way.

While there's no shortage of farm stands in the area, many families may enjoy the experience of heading to the fields themselves to pick their own fruits and berries.

"Pick your own is a big attrac-

tion, and we are the only PYO farm in this area. People walk into our store and want to know, 'What can we pick ourselves?' People want fresh produce and the only way to know if something is truly fresh is to pick it yourself," said Christopher Carville, owner/farm manager of The Pickin' Patch in Avon, which is in its 350th year of farming.

"Fresh produce appeals to everyone and it's fairly easy to do. Parents come with young children so they can teach them where food comes from. Businesspeople on their way home from work stop in to pick up a few things for dinner. We also have hard-core pickers who come and spend hours picking so they can

freeze it for use all year long. [People] like knowing exactly where their food came from and when it was picked. We also have a beautiful location, so people enjoy spending time on our farm."

The Desmarais family of Glastonbury is avid pickers and enjoys trying different farms in the area.

"We prefer our fruits to be fresh and local, and Glastonbury has a lot to offer. We do purchase from the farm stands, but we try to make time most weeks to skip the stand and head to the fields. We consider it a family activity. [There are] no electronic distractions, so we talk and joke as a family while picking. We

often make it more fun by having contests, like who can pick the most blueberries or whose strawberry is the biggest," said Dennis Desmarais, who picks with his wife, Lisa, and their daughters, Allison and Josephine. "I think it is important for kids to have an appreciation for where food comes from, and the hard work that farmers and pickers have to do to put food on our plates."

Sandi Rose, member/manager of Rose's Berry Farm LLC in South Glastonbury, said she's noticed some customer favorites.

"Number one would be strawberries, since they are the first fruits available after a long winter; number two, blueberries; followed

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Summer LIFE

by number three, pumpkins/apples. Fall items have surged in popularity over the last 10 years because most do it as an outing with a group for a fun day in the country," she said.

Carville agreed that strawberries and pumpkins are big draws.

"Strawberries, obviously, because they are delicious and pumpkins because we offer free hayrides to the pumpkin fields for picking in October," said Carville, who suggests not wearing your Sunday best for the activity. "It involves dirt and usually some sweat, so dress appropriately."

Of course, the rewards of PYO are worth a little dirt.

"You can pick the freshest fruit or vegetables plus enjoy being in the country. Another reason is they get to know their farmer and trust them with using safe practices. Also, being able to enjoy the farm atmosphere and nature at its best is always a draw," Rose said. "We as farmers forget that most people don't enjoy the view we do and they enjoy coming just to enjoy being at the farm." For families that want time together outdoors for further bonding, but don't

necessarily want a kitchen full of fruit, geocaching and earthcaching are also options to enjoy in the area or around the world.

Geocaching

Geocaching, also known as the world's largest treasure hunt, is all about adventure. A cache is the term used for some kind of treasure, typically a small box with trinkets inside. With geocaching, a cache is placed at a distinct coordinate, and participants can go online to find its location and search for the cache. Once it's found, participants can sign the logbook inside and swap out the trinkets to leave for the next person. The value of the find is not the key to geocaching, it's the adventure.

Similarly, earthcaching provides



participants with an explicit location, but the treasure that is found at the end of this journey is of a natural state. Following the location coordinates while earthcaching brings those involved to a geological wonder.

There are numerous earthcaching locations in Connecticut, some of which are located in the Farmington Valley and surrounding area, with one in Talcott Mountain State Park and another in the Old Newgate Mine

in East Granby. Further south, Rocky Hill's Dinosaur State Park also offers earthcaching adventures.

More information about earthcaching can be found through the state's Department of Energy and Environmental Protection website, while coordinates for geocaching can be found at www.geocaching.com.

For those who want adventures in a slightly more controlled environment, Dinosaur State Park offers its own version of looking for treasure.

"During the summer we have an outdoor mining activity," Park Manager Meg Enkler said. "Visitors buy a bag of what we call mining rough, so it has fossils, gems or sometimes both."

Participants put this roughage into a trough with water and sift through to find the various trinkets.

"We have little ID kits that were put together by a geologist so they can learn the fossils and gems," Enkler said.

Whatever activity a family chooses, summer is the time to get moving. **WL**



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Summer **LIFE**

Backyard FARMING

Tips for turning a home into a homestead

by **Lynn Woike**

LIFE Staff

As more people take an interest in where their food is produced and by whom, and as the do-it-yourself trend continues, homeowners are beginning to realize it doesn't get any more local than their own backyards and that the farm-to-chef table concept can involve your own kitchen.

Most homes have space for a garden and a compost bin. Fruit trees and bushes can be planted in place of ornamental

varieties. There might even be room for a couple of chickens and even a goat.

"I think there's a lot of things that I do on a farm that will downscale well for people who are interested in becoming backyard homesteaders," said Jenn Djambazov, the farmer at the 77-acre Community Farm of Simsbury. Crops are primarily grown for Simsbury's food pantry and other area food access programs.

The major consideration, she said, was to be realistic about the amount of



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time available to take on additional chores.

"Gardening is pretty hard work; don't set yourself up to fail. Think what you want to get out of it," she said, noting that a 10-foot by 20-foot garden "is going to take a couple of hours a week" not counting the additional time needed at the beginning and end of the season.

"It's a lot easier to say, 'Awesome,' and do more next year than become overwhelmed your first year and never do this again," Djambazov said.

She has a friend who loves to can, so she grows crops such as beets and green beans that she preserves for the rest of the year.

"Others just want to go out at the end of the day and cut a salad to eat. Some want to have chickens and learn to keep bees. Some just want their kids to go outside and get dirty," Djambazov said.

Once you know what you want, you can plan accordingly.

"What you want to get out of it will tell you where you start," she said.

She recommends books, videos, articles and other materials by Elliot Coleman, whom she called "the modern New Englander's guru on backyard farming in a way that

makes sense."

"He works small scale," she said, and keeps things simple. He urges homeowners to use all the space they have, offering thrifty ideas for building with repurposed materials.

Talking to local farmers is another valuable source of information.

"Stop at roadside stands and strike up a conversation," she suggested, also recommending attending presentations by local garden clubs.

Now is a good time to prepare a plot for planting next year, Djambazov said. First, she recommends paying attention to sun and shadow.

West Simsbury homesteader Jon Gooch agreed and recommended mapping out the sun and shade patterns of trees, structures and fences over the seasons to determine the area with the maximum hours of direct sunlight.

Together with his wife, Margaret, and their daughter, Lilia, they have kept a 45-square-foot garden for four years.

He said he has found the best

method for gardening is raised beds that are 8-10 inches tall, 4 feet wide and as long as desired. The long side, he said, "should run along the east-west axis so that optimum sunshine falls for the longest period of the day during the growing season."

If the area is currently a lawn, placing layers of old carpet or cardboard down in late summer will effectively kill off underlying weeds and grass by next spring.

Construct a boundary using untreated lumber or concrete blocks, remove any carpet or cardboard, then fill the beds with a soil containing organic compost material, Gooch said.

"You'll always have a better garden if you start preparing the year before," Djambazov said, noting that it's the organic materials added to the soil that produce healthy crops.

"The nutrients come from what's in the ground," Djambazov said.

Animals can help transition a lawn into a garden.

Chickens, for instance, will eat all the grass, seeds and bugs while also fertilizing the soil.

Costing about \$3 at local feed supply stores, chickens need shelter and water. In return, they'll keep ticks, mosquitoes, grubs and mice away, she said.

Haley Billipp, who is farming the same land in Newington that her ancestors worked for generations, raises chickens. Her 1 1/2-year-old daughter likes to feed them.

Because most towns do not require agricultural zoning to keep chickens, it is a reasonable undertaking.

"It's doable," she said. "You can go on Craigslist and find chicks for sale, but also little coops and mobile chicken yards that people build and sell for \$500 to \$1,000."

Raising chickens requires effort, and Billipp guesses she spends as much on the feed as she would the expensive organic eggs she would otherwise buy, but said there is more to consider than finances.

"You know exactly what you're getting and they're a lot fresher, so they taste a lot better," she said.

Two added bonuses are the fact chickens are fun for children, and chickens eat table scraps and other organic waste that would otherwise end up in a compost pile or the waste stream.

When it comes to animals in the



Photo courtesy of Jon Gooch

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backyard, Gooch said that chances are the need will be to keep out wildlife such as chipmunks, squirrels, mice, deer and bear. He recommends a 6-foot-high mesh fence plus a foot high's worth of tiny-holed mesh vertically affixed at ground level.

Farming, however, does not require a garden plot. It could involve planting fruit trees such as pear and cherry.

"There's a lot of things you can put in your ground that are a longer-time investment, but once they start producing, they will be established for decades," Djambazov said, noting, "Connecticut has beautiful ground for blueberries."

Asparagus and rhubarb are two other perennial crops that, once established, will produce for decades.

Gardening can also be done in pots, and Djambazov has worked with senior centers and assisted living facilities to design raised beds so people in those communities can get their hands dirty.

While she composts in a huge pile turned with a tractor, small-scale composting bins can be built or purchased that will tuck into any landscape and turn garden refuse, leaves, grass clippings and food scraps into a nutrient-rich soil enhancer.

Efforts to homestead may be difficult at first, but with each season it will be easier.

"Experiment with it. You'll be able to see if what you're doing is working – either the plants grow or they don't."

Gooch said, "Preparation really is a huge part of the process, along with the realization that there are as many disappointments as there are triumphs."

Experience has taught him that "backyard gardening is 90 percent mental and 100 percent physical. If that doesn't seem to add up, it's because it doesn't. There are no shortcuts, easy streets or opt-outs. Mother Nature is an unforgiving task-mistress and does not cease in her efforts to

confound even the best laid plans."

Yet, he said, there are rewards – "the delicious taste of home-grown produce and a personal sense of achievement."

Homesteading is both a mindset and a lifestyle, Billipp said.

Modern homesteading does not need to take place off the grid on a huge expanse of land – it can occur in suburbia, apartments, planned communities and cities. Canning, seed harvesting, herbal medicine, sewing, soap making, home brewing, candle making, hunting and fishing, bartering and waste management are all part of the picture.

It means making choices that use less energy, produce less waste and are more wholesome.

"Buy things that will last a long time or have multiple uses," she suggested. "Make your soda bottle into a birdfeeder or try to research some craft to reuse items rather than buying new things."

It's about doing more for yourself, Billipp said. **WL**



Meyer Lemon and Sage Presse

"Very tasty and perfect for summer," said Judith Gosnell Kempe of Cherry Brook Garden Club who submitted this recipe used at the group's annual luncheon last year.

4 quartered medium lemons juiced

½ cup fresh sage leaves

1 cup simple syrup

(½ c sugar, ½ c water)

24 ounces club soda

Place the sage leaves and simple syrup in a blender. Process and strain with fine sieve. Adding ½ teaspoon salt to entire mixture is optional. Add lemon juice and divide mixture into eight glasses filled with ice. Add club soda just before serving. Serves eight.

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Salon Paris at 30

Wethersfield salon originally based in Hartford

by **Mara Dresner**
Staff Writer

Paris Mastorakis was practically born into the beauty industry. A native of Greece, his family moved to Hartford when he was a child.

"My dad was a barber so I was always around that atmosphere. It was kind of like in the family. I love the social aspect of the salon," Mastorakis said.

"I did go to UConn for a year and thought maybe I would do engineering. Now I engineer haircuts," added the man who owns Salon Paris in Wethersfield, which is celebrating 30 years in business.

He decided to pursue the women's side of the business rather than following in his father's footsteps.

"You can be more creative. Men's haircutting is kind of boring; it's one dimensional," he said.

Not long after entering the industry, Mastorakis had the opportunity to open his own place.

"I only worked at one salon, Gervacio's in downtown Hartford. After about a year of working there, I was trying to look for another job. I was not getting [enough of] the new clients that were coming in that salon," he recalled.

"At the moment I was kind of looking, this couple asked me one day if I was interested in buying a salon. Two weeks later I was owning

a salon. I was 21 at the time." It was not a plan. It was more of God's destiny, something like that."

His salon opened April 1, 1986.

The original salon was located in Hartford. When his lease was up, he moved the salon to Wethersfield. October will mark 22 years here.

In the fall of 2014, he completely remodeled the salon. His shop was closed for all of October and two weeks of November. The owner of Bellezza Salon & Spa, a former employee, let him work out of her salon for those six weeks.

"We basically gutted everything in here. Everything is new, new walls, new lighting, new ceiling, new floor, new plumbing. Everything is all new," Mastorakis said, describing the design as "more of a modern eclectic; a little bit of modern, a little bit of rustic, a little bit of sexy, kind of soothing, inviting."

The salon features a wall that serves as a gallery for local artists. Vintage hot pick chairs, crystal chandeliers and a wall of crystals are some of the other unique aspects.

Beyond the aesthetics Mastorakis, who lives in Rocky Hill, is all about hair.

"My concept is beautiful hair in a professional, relaxed environment and attention to detail with modern techniques, whether it's with color-



Photo by Mara Dresner

Paris Mastorakis, owner of Salon Paris, is all about healthy hair.

ing or haircutting, and always staying fashion forward," he said.

Darcey Griffith has been a client since 1998. She lives in Shelton now and even when she was living in New York for 17 years, she made the trip to Salon Paris.

"He's my favorite; he's so good. Since the first time I went to him, he does an amazing job and he's never let me down since. I always love what he does. He's done just about every haircut, every color on me that you can imagine," Griffith said.

"He has been doing this for so long and he really knows what he's doing. [He] stays on top of current trends; he just knows his stuff. He knows what will look good on you and he really cares about your hair."

Salon Paris focuses exclusively on hair, a trend that Mastorakis is seeing throughout the industry.

"I had a more full-service salon.

The industry has gotten away from that. Now nail is separate, spa is separate, hair is separate. We're back to hair only," he said of the change his salon made more than a decade ago.

He is focused on the quality of the service.

"I've seen that people have gotten away from beautiful hair and tried to make it more convenient. We're not trying to make it faster, more time efficient. It's really about taking the time to do hair that's not compromised by trying to use a stronger product to make it work faster," he said.

"Attention to the integrity of hair is what I've noticed has gone from most salons. They're so worried about getting the next client in and out, they're sometimes shortcutting the service," he added.

"In my salon we've gotten away from using harsher chemicals. We've gotten into more organic colors, products that are less damaging to hair, to leave it more healthy and bouncy."

His enjoyment of his work is still clear.

"Mostly, it's just the satisfaction of people liking their hair, the idea of creating something new for someone, and them enjoying the change and being outwardly expressive. That's the most rewarding thing when people [say] they love it," Mastorakis said.

"We're always staying fashion forward and always supplying the client with the most beautiful, healthiest hair they can have. We're not just providing a creative hairstyle, but we also make sure the hair stays healthy so it looks beautiful." **WL**

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Off and running

Brandon Collins is most at ease when he's circling the track

by Mark Jahne
Editor

Brandon Collins doesn't have much time to talk. He's too busy running. The 9-year-old son of Landis and Alisa Collins is a fourth-grade student at Webb School. He has a passion for long-distance running and is already placing high at events throughout the Northeast and Atlantic Coast.

Brandon competed in the AAU Indoor National Championships held March 12-13 in Landover, Maryland. He became a two-time All-American there, placing third in the nation in the 1,500 meters and seventh in the nation in the 800 meters in the division for 10-year-old boys.

Three runners fell during the 800 event. Brandon simply hurdled them and kept on going.

"Sometimes I do relays," he said.

That involves running one leg of a four-person race, in his case, usually the second one. He first took up running when he was 5 and his interest and achievements have consistently grown since then.

"At that time, we lived in Quincy, Massachusetts, and I found a running club, his mother said.

It seemed to make sense because whenever the family went to the park Brandon wanted nothing to

do with the playground equipment. He just wanted to run, and run, and run.

He joined the Central Connecticut Jaguars in Bloomfield when his family moved to Wethersfield. It is a competitive running organization that participates

"I like running because, to me, running around relaxes me and makes me feel calm."

Brandon Collins

in events sanctioned by USA Track & Field and the American Athletic Union.

Brandon races throughout Connecticut and New York as well as the aforementioned meet in Maryland. He's scheduled for an event later this year in Texas but is not too keen on flying in an airplane to get there, something he has never done.

"Last August, he went to the AAU Junior Olympics in Norfolk, Virginia," Alisa said.

Brandon placed among the top

40 runners in the nation in his age group for the 1500 meters. He favors the longer events, including the mile, even though the short-distance sprinters are the people who tend to get the most attention, like one of his favorite runners, Jamaican Olympian Usain Bolt.

"The 100 is my favorite one to watch," he said.

He looks forward to trying out for the Wethersfield High School track team once he enters ninth grade. Longer distance races require a different approach than sprints and Alisa said he is learning to pace himself with the full race in mind.

"I practice three times a week for outdoor and two times a week for



Photo by Mark Jahne

Brandon Collins shows off the running medals he has already won this year.

indoor," Brandon said. "I'm known as the Beige Bullet."

He also participates in weekly meets where most of his peer group race in the shorter events. That's a lot of running, but he doesn't mind. He makes sure to eat light when he competes, usually just fruit.

In addition to running, Brandon also does well in the classroom, despite the fact that Webb is his third school in four years.

"He is phenomenal in science and math," Alisa said.

"I like running because, to me,

running around relaxes me and makes me feel calm. I have a good time when I run," Brandon said.

The longer a race he can run, the better.

"I get to do my favorite thing for a longer time. I like track because it allows me to travel to different places around the country," he said.

"Track has brought me and him very close together. I'm his biggest fan and harshest critic," his mother added. "Between this year and last year he's improved so much." **WL**

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Many happy returns

150 Prospect Coffeehouse celebrates its first birthday

by Mark Jahne
Editor

When organizers launched the 150 Prospect Coffeehouse a year ago, they didn't know whether it would be successful or not. They simply hoped that enough people would show up to make it worth opening the hall of the Wethersfield United Methodist Church on a Saturday evening every month.

Now that a year has passed, they are delighted with the results. More and more people are both sharing their talent and coming to enjoy the music, dance and other performances.

"It's been growing, really hitting

its stride," Tanja Moriarty, one of the organizers, said.

She greets patrons at the door and signs in the performers. It's an open mic format, so anyone can just show up and ask for a few minutes on stage to sing, play or display another talent.

Church volunteers make sure there are chili, pizza and other snack items available, as well as soft drinks. All of this, as well as admission, is free, part of the church's outreach efforts.

"People are really comfortable," Moriarty said. "We've heard back from the performers that we're very friendly and welcoming."



J.M. Roberts moved from New Orleans to Wethersfield several years ago. He brought the music of the Crescent City with him.

The audience ranges between 45 and 55 people for each monthly coffeehouse. The 150 Prospect night occurs on the second Saturday of each month.

Moriarty said some of the musi-

cians find performing in front of a small audience a good way to test or refine new material before taking it out to larger, paying venues.

Pastor Albert Hahn is thrilled with what he has witnessed thus far. He also gets feedback from performers and audience alike that this open mic night is different and better than others in the area.

"We get great feedback. When we started, we didn't really know how it would work out. We've very pleased. People came," he said. "It feels very authentic; it feels like this is us, not just a program we're trying to promote. People come together and celebrate life."

Hahn also sees it as a great way to forget problems, reduce stress and just enjoy life. He's pleased with the diversity of the crowd and that young people consider 150 Prospect a pleasant and safe place to hang out on a Saturday evening.

Some of the performers have gone on to play at the church's religious services. **WL**

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A select seven

Chamber of commerce grants awards at its annual dinner

by Mark Jahne
Editor

They stand out as exceptional volunteers or professionals in their respective fields, going above and beyond to serve the community. They are considered examples of what makes this town special.

As it does every year, the Wethersfield Chamber of Commerce held its annual dinner and awards ceremony the evening of May 11 at Wethersfield Country Club. The highlight was the presentation of seven awards.



Photos by Mark Jahne

Barbara Harris Bellas won the Town Volunteer of the Year Award.

Those honored, and their awards, were: D'Esopo Funeral Chapel, business of the year; Diana McAdams, chamber member of the year; Barbara Harris Bellas, town volunteer of the year; Wethersfield Diner, beautification; Christine Taylor, town employee of the year; Jeff Morrisette, public safety and Kim Fitzner, educator of the year.

Chamber President Todd Lamore credited D'Esopo with being what he called a quiet force in town with its support of numerous organizations and events. The business is 111 years old.

McAdams is a member of the chamber's board of directors. She has fulfilled leadership roles at many of its events including the Cornfest and silent auction. She will add Holidays on Main to the list later this year.

She is also active as a volunteer with the Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, the Greater Hartford Association of Realtors and her church.

The Pribyson family was honored for taking a long-empty diner on the Silas Deane Highway and bringing it back to life. Their Wethersfield Diner opened this past year.



Janice and Stacey Pribyson took home the Town Beautification Award for the Wethersfield Diner.



Courtesy photo

D'Esopo Funeral Chapel, led by Michael Klett, Janet Klett and George D'Esopo, won the Business of the Year Award. The trio is shown with another honor they received, the Excellence in Customer Service Award from the Johnson Consulting Group.

Taylor, a social worker and case manager, was lauded for 32 years of service. Town Manager Jeff Bridges said she always finds a way to help her clients and serves as a dedicated

advocate for senior citizens and military veterans.

Bellas was cited for leading the team of volunteers who built the Loretta's Dream pavilion at Mill



Christine Taylor, second from right, received the honors for town employee of the year. She is shown with, from left, Kathy Bagley, town director of parks, recreation, social and youth services; her son Steven Taylor; and Erica Texeira, assistant director to Bagley.

Woods Park. Others credits are Webb School PTO, Wethersfield Schools Parent Council, Richard M. Keane Foundation, Mikey's Place 5K Road Race and Pine Acres.

She is also a soccer coach and organizes the annual Walk to School Day. Bellas is the leader of the Keane-sponsored Running Club at all five public elementary schools.

Morrisette started as a Fire Explorer in 1979 at Fire Co. 3 on Ridge Road and now has 37 years with the fire service. He has been the department's deputy fire marshal since 2003.

Fire Chief Rich Bailey said over those years Morrisette has responded to more than 3,170 calls and saved at least two lives from burning structures.

He is employed as the state fire administrator and has written numerous protocols and practices that provide for increased safety for both the public and firefighters. Morrisette was recently elected to the Connecticut State Firefighters Association Hall of Fame.

Fitzner started the Transition



Deputy Fire Marshal Jeff Morrisette captured this year's Public Safety Award.

Academy for high school students with special needs in 2010 and its programs have grown dramatically since then. Many of them are held in the community and involve



Diane McAdams, a Realtor with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices, was named the chamber member of the year.

local businesses.

"She is a tireless advocate for her students and their families," Superintendent of Schools Michael Emmett said.



The educator of the year is Kim Fitzner, director of the school district's Transition Academy.

He added that the program has become so successful that it needs to find a larger space than it currently occupies in the Pitkin Community Center. **WL**

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Handing off after 26 years

Michael Orsini will retire as president of youth football program

by Mark Jahne
Editor

Twenty-six years is a long time to do the same thing, but when football is in your blood, it's difficult to let go.

Letting go is what Michael Orsini has decided to do after 26 years as president of Eagles Youth Football & Cheerleading, also known as Wethersfield Youth Football. He's only 46, but he believes it's time for someone else to take the reins.

Orsini played football at Wethersfield High School and wanted to revive youth football in town, so he set out to establish a league while he was still a teenager, just 19 years old.

"I had no kids. I wasn't even married. I had just graduated high school," he recalled. "It was a passion. I started the league in November of 1989."

One of the first things he did was meet with Marty Sitler, recreation supervisor of the town Parks and Recreation Department. Orsini said Sitler told him the first step was to determine whether there were enough children interested in playing football and cheerleading to make creating the league worth the effort.

"There was no youth football in town at the time," Sitler recalled. "In February of 1990 we did three free clinics at the community center. ... We averaged about 60 kids a clinic."

That number was enough to get things started with a non-tackle flag football format, something the league still offers today. Cheer-leading began right away as well. The tackle program started the following year.

The concept was to provide a training program to help boys prepare to play at the high school level once they reached that age. Orsini worked out a deal with Herb's Sports Shop to secure the necessary equipment.

"It's an expensive game. We're one of the few youth organizations that fall under the recreation department. That helped us with insurance," he said.

The original league had four teams, each with an A squad and a B squad. All of the games were played on Stillman Field next to Hanmer School.

"We kept it an in-town league for 15 years," he said.

Participation was limited to residents of Wethersfield and Rocky Hill for those first 15 years. WYF then became a travel league and Rocky Hill formed its own program. An 11-member governing board was established.

Wethersfield Youth Football is a member of the Connecticut Youth Football League.

As time went on, Orsini married and became the father of two sons.



Photo by Mark Jahne

Michael Orsini is stepping down as president of Wethersfield Youth Football after a 26-year run.

Both played in the league.

Today, tackle football games are played on Cottone Field behind the high school, and flag football games are held on the field that adjoins the Harvey Fuller Senior Housing complex.

"It's had it's ups and downs," Orsini said as he reflected on his presidency.

It was much easier to recruit volunteers in the early years.

Registration declined, something he blames on all of the attention given to concussions over the past few years at the collegiate and professional level.

The irony, Orsini pointed out, is that concussions are also common in soccer, but that sport has not been impacted as much, if at all. National statistics show soccer ranks third in concussion frequency, with ice hockey in second place.



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ALYSSA AJODHI	WETHERSFIELD COUNTRY CLUB AWARD	MADISON GIOLITO	BRENDAN MURPHY MEMORIAL AWARD	KISHAN PATEL	THOMAS P. WATSON, JR. MEMORIAL AWARD, WETHERSFIELD SCHOOL FOOTBALL
NATALIE ALBRECHT	CITIZENS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD	LEWIS GLYNN	CITIZENS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD	CARISSA PECKRUL	HARVEY AND MAYBELLE FULLER MEMORIAL AWARD
MADISON ALBRIGHT	RUBY WEGMAN MEMORIAL AWARD	ABIGAIL GOTHERS	DOMENICA ELISA HEINIMANN TORRANCE MEMORIAL AWARD	ARIANA PERSSON	MICHAEL BAIO MEMORIAL AWARD
LAUREN ARIENZALE	RUBY WEGMAN MEMORIAL AWARD	BRENDEN GRIFFITH	HANMER ELEMENTARY PTO AWARD	NAVARE PRATT	DOLLARS FOR SCHOLARS PAST PRESIDENT'S AWARD, WETHERSFIELD FOOTBALL BOOSTERS AWARD
CHRISTOPHER AYERS	WETHERSFIELD COUNTRY CLUB AWARD	PETER HAHN	WINIFRED PIPER MEMORIAL AWARD, DR. PHILIP T. SEHL MEMORIAL AWARD	MICHAELA RANNIELLO	LINDA F. KLAPATCH MEMORIAL AWARD
CLAUDIA BARONE	WETHERSFIELD COUNTRY CLUB AWARD	DESTINI HALL	ARTHUR & HELEN M. WATSON MEMORIAL AWARD	JOSEPH RINGROSE	CITIZENS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD
ALEXANDER BARTIS	OSCAR WEGMAN MEMORIAL AWARD	JOSHUA HALLA	CHARLES WRIGHT SCHOOL PTO AWARD	JOSE RIVERA	COLDWELL BANKER RESIDENTIAL BROKERAGE AWARD, WETHERSFIELD COUNTRY CLUB AWARD
BRILEY BARTONE	DEBRA ANN GATTINELLA-KURYS MEMORIAL AWARD	WILLIAM HART	LAURENT AND BRONYA FORTIN MEMORIAL AWARD	GABRIELA RIZZO-VELEZ	DANIEL, GEORGE AND MICHAEL D'ESOP
ALEXANDRA BERRY	CHARTWELL DINING SERVICE AWARD	NATALIE HEAVREN	EARLE R. MUNROE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD	NASILDA SADIK	BOBBY SULLIVAN MEMORIAL AWARD
CASSIDY BOURASSA	WETHERSFIELD CLERICAL, SECRETARIAL & PARAPROFESSIONAL CHAPTER LOCAL 2001 AWARD IN HONOR OF MARY BETH DEL SOLE	JACOB HICKEY	MIKEY'S PLACE AWARD IN MEMORY OF WILLIAM AND JOANNE HUFFMAN	STACY SANTA CRUZ	THOMAS C. MILVAE MEMORIAL AWARD
ANDREA BUCKNAM	PATRICIA PAC AND PAUL LETENDRE AWARD	REBECCA HINE	CITIZENS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD	GINA SANTAPAOLA	RUBY WEGMAN MEMORIAL AWARD
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JONATHAN CARABALLO	WETHERSFIELD COUNTRY CLUB AWARD	JACOB JOHNSON	CITIZENS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD	TAYLOR SCUTARI	WETHERSFIELD COUNTRY CLUB AWARD
LAUREN CARDENAS	MARCIA NEVILLE DOOHEN MEMORIAL AWARD	TAYLOR JONES	CITIZENS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD	INGELA SHANNAHAN	FERGUSON SCHOLARSHIP AWARD
RACHEL CARUK	PATRICK & LINDA PROCTOR AWARD FOR EDUCATION	NICHOLAS KALLAJIAN	PETER BEAUDIN MEMORIAL AWARD	BRIANNA SHIVE	DORIS MARIANELLA MEMORIAL AWARD
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JEMAR COOPER	COLDWELL BANKER RESIDENTIAL BROKERAGE AWARD, OSCAR WEGMAN MEMORIAL AWARD	ALAN KY	WETHERSFIELD COUNTRY CLUB AWARD	COLIN STEWART	OSCAR WEGMAN MEMORIAL AWARD, WETHERSFIELD ALUMNI-PHILIP C. CAHILL MEMORIAL AWARD
TAYLOR CORAZZO	HIGHCREST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PTO AWARD	KATHERINE LAMBERTI	CITIZENS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD	MAURA STICKLEY	THE SHULTS FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP
AUSTIN CRONKHITE	SURVIVORS OF '53	PAIGE LANDERS	WETHERSFIELD COUNTRY CLUB AWARD	LUKE SURAWSKI	CITIZENS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD
LEIAH CUTKOMP	CITIZENS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD	STAVON LASSITER	CITIZENS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD	MEAGHAN SZILAGYI	CITIZENS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD
ABIGAIL DAVIS	PESCATELLO FAMILY SOCCER SCHOLAR-ATHLETE AWARD	BENJAMIN LEPO	CITIZENS CLASS OF 1972	ZAID TAHIR	OSCAR WEGMAN MEMORIAL AWARD
DIONNA DAVIS	DANIEL, GEORGE AND MICHAEL D'ESOP MEMORIAL AWARD	AMY LEWIS	DOLLARS FOR SCHOLARS SUNSHINE LAUNDRY AWARD, OSCAR WEGMAN AWARD	RONGWEI TAN	THOMAS AND BEY LASHER MEMORIAL AWARD
CHRISTINA DEANGELO	HIGHCREST SCHOOL STAFF AWARD IN HONOR OF “LESLIE” COURSEY, WETHERSFIELD FEDERATION OF TEACHERS AWARD	BRENDAN LIVINGSTON	MIKE ORSINI MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP	ALYSSA TONUCCI	ELIZABETH CATARIUS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD
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KRISTINA ERCOLANI	SILAS DEANE MIDDLE SCHOOL PAC AWARD	MATTHEW MARENA	WETHERSFIELD COUNTRY CLUB AWARD	ALLISON WEED	CITIZENS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD
MEGAN FABI	SILAS DEANE MIDDLE SCHOOL PAC AWARD	MITCHELL MARENA	CITIZENS CLASS OF 1961	JOANNA WILLIAMS	CITIZENS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD
CHRISTINA FAIENZA	WETHERSFIELD COUNTRY CLUB AWARD	JULIA MARTIN	AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY BOURNE KEENEY AWARD	RICHARD WILLIAMS	DR. WILLIAM STORMS MEMORIAL AWARD, WETHERSFIELD HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL BOOSTERS AWARD
CHRISTINA FAIENZA	DOLLARS FOR SCHOLARS FLOWER BOX AWARD	MELISSA MATARAZZO	LAURENT AND BRONYA FORTIN MEMORIAL AWARD	MATTHEW WILSON	BOB AND PAT SULLIVAN MEMORIAL AWARD
ROSMARIE FAIENZA	VILLAGE PIZZA AWARD	CAMERON MCFARLANE	CITIZENS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD	ERIC WRIGHT	SPERIDON “PETE” LEPPONES MEMORIAL AWARD
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MARGARET FITZPATRICK	WETHERSFIELD HIGH SCHOOL PARENT-TEACHER-STUDENT ASSOCIATION AWARD	ALEXA MORREALE	HARRIET MILVAE MEMORIAL AWARD		
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JOHN FOSTER	RUBY WEGMAN MEMORIAL AWARD	ANSLY NIX	WARREN AND CHARLOTTE WILLSEY MEMORIAL AWARD		
PIERRE FRANKLIN	KAHN COMPANIES AWARD	MELANI NORSIGIAN	WETHERSFIELD GEORGE D. RITCHIE SOCCER CLUB AWARD - PETER J. KRUSIEWICZ MEMORIAL AWARD		
		DANIEL O'BRIEN	OSCAR WEGMAN MEMORIAL AWARD		
		RACHEL OCASIO	HANMER ELEMENTARY STAFF CHEER AWARD		

WETHERSFIELD HIGH SCHOOL



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During its best years, Wethersfield Youth Football served as many as 450 players a season; soccer draws three times as many players. Orsini said his league and the Wethersfield George D. Ritchie Soccer Club have always enjoyed positive relations.

"There was a point where we had to turn cheerleaders away," he said. "The numbers were always very good."

Today's league has three teams with A, B and C squads. Wethersfield children have more sports options than ever, including a new lacrosse league.

Orsini is pleased that his efforts over more than a quarter of a century touched the lives of thousands of local children. He said the coaches and other league officials sometimes became father figures to players and cheerleaders.

"It's a big commitment," he said.

All of the adults did what they could to draw the best out of each child, he added. Safety was always the first priority. The second priority was to make sure that the program

"I don't care who wins and loses. I care about the kids on the field."

Michael Orsini

always focused upon the participants and not the coaches, parents or other adults.

"I don't care who wins and loses. I care about the kids on the field," Orsini said.

Paul Camarco grew up in town and has been involved with Wethersfield Youth Football for 16 years. He was vice president for 10 years and continues to serve as an at-large board member even though he lives elsewhere. He praised Orsini for his commitment to the program.

"You can describe him with one word – dedication," Camarco said. "It wasn't about his kids. It was about the kids playing in the league. He's well organized. He knows everybody."

Camarco said part of Orsini's magic was that he built so many strong relationships over the years.

"He really was the cornerstone

upon which it was built. He built a structure that can exist without him," he said.

While the structure will allow the league to continue, Orsini will be difficult to replace, he said.

Sitler reflected upon how he and Orsini built the league from nothing. They followed a focused step-by-step plan to create something similar to what existed in the past when boys played Midget Football at Mill Woods Park.

"He has been incredible," Sitler said of Orsini. "He genuinely got involved for the love of the sport and for Wethersfield kids."

He said most volunteers come and go, but Orsini is a constant. The president made it a point to be available on a 24/7 basis to handle any questions or concerns about the league.

"He did more than resurrect it,

he started it all over again. His leadership has been phenomenal," Craig Saharek, vice president of the league and longtime volunteer, said.

He said Orsini always made sure that things ran smoothly.

"He built a good thing here. We're trying to recruit and get some younger people [for the board]," Saharek said.

He gave Orsini credit for taking proactive steps to reduce the risk of concussions, including the hiring of professional consultants. An ambulance is on standby at every game of tackle football to quickly respond to any injury.

Coaches and other volunteers have all received training regarding concussions.

"It's been the number-one priority," Saharek said.

The two men have known each other for many years and coached together. Saharek has nothing but praise for the retiring president.

"He's a fantastic guy and he really cares about the program and the kids," he said. **WL**

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Max Bibo's at 15

Delicatessen celebrates anniversary of serving food to hungry patrons

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

Perhaps you've heard the legend of Maximillian Bibo. Dating back to the second half of the 15th century, legend has it that Bibo – the son of an Italian Contradore (mercenary soldier) and a Jewish poetess mother – came under the influence and protection of Lorenzo DiMedici.

Bibo gained a reputation for food preparation. Food, its appearance, texture and taste were held in lofty regard by the Medici family. "The best of the very best" was set on their tables and the responsibility of selecting the food was the responsibility of Max Bibo.

It became a saying throughout Tuscany to signal the exceptional and the excellent by saying, "e Bibo" – it is Bibo. Today Max Bibo's Delicatessen carries on that tradition of excellence.

Cari Colangelo, owner of Max Bibo's at the corner of the Silas Deane Highway and Wells Road, never fails to be amused by the tale, told in greater detail on its website. The restaurant is celebrating 15 years in town.

"When I graduated college, I traveled in Italy for eight weeks. While I was there, my parents came to visit me and my father kept looking at food, saying, 'When I come back, I have to do something; open a little deli or something.' In 1985, he opened up the first Max Bibo's with a credit card on Capitol Avenue in Hartford," she said.

Her parents, Robert and Joanne, didn't have any restaurant experience. They had owned a package store and Robert was a teacher. He kept teaching, even with the responsibility of a new restaurant.

"When he was trying to figure everything out, he came up with the name Bibo's. He wanted to make it a Jewish-Italian deli so he put the Max on it, then he wrote the history of Maximillian Bibo. We say it's a legend, but he just made it up," Colangelo said with a chuckle.

"The concept was very simple.

We just wanted to provide fresh, good food at a low cost to people with excellent customer service. It's basic, but what a business should do. And we wanted to make sure it was presented in a certain way, artistically."

She never planned to go into the business. She studied political science at Saint Anselm College in New Hampshire and was a high school history teacher for 17 years.

"I was just looking to get out, I wasn't happy teaching anymore. I always wanted to own my own business and didn't know what to do. Someone said, 'Do what you know.' I used to work summers with the family. I thought I'd better just stick with what I know," said Colangelo, who has since moved to Rocky Hill.

"I found this location. It was the old Congress Street Rotisserie. It was just kismet, just a synchronistic moment. He was selling just when I was looking. I called him up. The next day, he closed the business and I bought it. I sold my house to buy a deli."

She has stayed true to the family's roots.

"I really tried to stick to the business plan," she said. "We stick with mainly sandwiches, fresh pasta salads, different kinds of salads."

Colangelo likes customer feedback and will make a soup, for example, when a customer asks for it. She uses a number of family recipes.

"The Thursday meatball special? That's my grandmother's meatballs. All the pasta salads, the potato salads, they're all family recipes," she said.

Her brother, Robert, who lives in town, runs the two delis in Hartford. She often involves her staff in developing new recipes.

"We pick a recipe and just practice. We'll perfect it and then we'll sell it. It's really nice that everyone will take part in the cooking if they want to," she said.

While Colangelo said the menu hasn't changed much in 15 years,



Photo by Mara Dresner

Cari Colangelo owns Max Bibo's in Wethersfield, which is celebrating its 15th anniversary.

Max Bibo's is now doing a lot of corporate catering.

"That's a big change," she said.

Another change she's seen is the shift to healthier eating, as well as requests for gluten-free and vegetarian items. Colangelo enjoys some of Max Bibo's classic fare.

"I love the Mona Lisa Smiles, a roast beef sandwich; I love the Gobbler, which is turkey with cranberry sauce; I love the eggplant, we have great eggplant sandwiches.

"I love our soups. I love our beef barley, I love our clam chowder and lobster bisque. People go crazy for that," she said. "Probably our biggest sellers are the tortellini salad and bean salad."

Part of what she enjoys most about the business is the relationships.

"It's just a nice atmosphere here. I have a great crew and the customers are so nice. We have some customers coming in almost every day for almost 15 years," she said.

"If I'm within a 25-mile radius I will make it a point of trying to get over there and have a delicious lunch. The quality of the food is superb, but it's much more than that. It's family run. I've had the pleasure of meeting the dad, the mom, the daughter. You know that's it run with love," said Sherry Haller of West Hartford.

Her favorite sandwich is prosciutto, turkey, roasted peppers, provolone and oil on a Portuguese roll.

"They care about the quality of

the food and they care about the quality of the experience. I'm just delighted we have it nearby," Haller said.

The specialty sandwiches all have fun names, such as Maximillian's Preference (liverwurst, red onions, leaf lettuce, cucumbers, mustard and creamed horseradish on dark bread) and Lorenzo's Indiscretion (salami, provolone cheese, leaf lettuce and roasted red peppers on a hard roll).

In addition to lunch, Max Bibo's is open for breakfast.

"We make awesome egg sandwiches," Colangelo said.

She added that there's a reason that the restaurant closes at 4 p.m.

"From the first day I opened here, we had a line out the door. We ran out of food. That's why we kept it at 4 o'clock; we've been consistently busy since," she said.

Once in a while, the restaurant is open in the evening and sometimes has a band on a Saturday night. It's also available for private parties and fundraisers, an area Colangelo wants to develop.

"The big thing I want to do is open it up for fundraisers at night. For me, it's a space that's available and I want to give back," she said.

Some day, she'd also like to build an outdoor patio.

"I love cooking, I love food. The food is really good. I eat it all the time, we all do. It's fun to me. We like making good food. It tastes as good as it looks," she said. **WL**

People Notes

Freshman forward **Ryan Peterson** of the Pace University men's basketball team was selected to the 2015-16 Northeast-10 Conference All-Rookie Team. He was named the Northeast-10 Conference men's basketball rookie of the week on three different occasions this season and picked up five Corvias Eastern College Athletic Conference Men's Basketball Rookie of the Week awards, as well as the Met Basketball Writers Association honorable mention in January.

Katherine Lamberti and **Navarre Pratt** were honored as Wethersfield High School's CIAC Scholar Athletes. Lamberti has played four different varsity sports: cross-country, basketball, outdoor track and tennis. Pratt has played

football, indoor track and outdoor track for four years.

Taylor Galusha and **Alyssa DiFiore**, seniors at Wethersfield High School, signed letters of intent to swim at the collegiate level and Julia Migliorati will golf next school year. Taylor will attend Merrimack College, Alyssa will attend Bryant University and Julia will be at the University of Hartford. Taylor and Alyssa are shown with Coach Lee Schwartzman and their parents, Phyllis and Nicholas DiFiore and Mary Ann and Howard Galusha, along with sister Kathryn. Julia is shown with her parents Ben and Denise Migliorati and her coach Carl Mearman.

Richard Williams, a senior at Wethersfield High School, commit-



Richard Williams

international English honor society.

Sierra Colon, a student at Eastern Connecticut State University, is one of 250 undergraduate students from across the United States selected to receive the prestigious Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State. Colon will use the scholarship this summer to intern with the Surplus People Project, a nonprofit organization in Cape Town, South Africa.

Sierra Colon and **James Dignoti** were inducted into Pi Sigma Alpha, the national honor society for political science, at Eastern Connecticut State University.

Katelyn Rutty was inducted into the Beta Gamma Sigma national honor society for business majors at Western New England University. **WL**



NORTHEAST-10 CONFERENCE
#5 RYAN PETERSON ALL-ROOKIE TEAM

Ryan Peterson



Katherine Lamberti and Navarre Pratt

ted to play football at Springfield College next year. He is shown with his mother Luz Williams, brother **Alex Gonzalez**, niece **Julianna Ortiz** and **Coach John Campanello**.

Gina Lanzano was welcomed into Sigma Tau Delta National Honor Society at Western New England University. Sigma Tau Delta is the



Julia Migliorati



Taylor Galusha and Alyssa DiFiore

News roundup

Association honors Moore

The Connecticut Association of Schools honored Thomas Moore, principal of Wethersfield High School, for service to CAS-CIAC. He received a CAS Citation, the association's highest honor.

He has served CAS and the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference for 29 years in various capacities including CAS board of directors, Student Activities Board of Control, CAS Nominating Committee, CAS HS Professional Studies Committee, CAS representative on the NEASC Commission on Public Secondary Schools, CIAC Eligibility Revision Committee, founding member and chairman of the CIAC Eligibility Review Board, CIAC Football Committee and CIAC Boy's Swimming Committee chairman.

Additionally, Moore was selected as the NASSP and CAS high school principal of the year in 2013 and received a CAS-CIAC letter of commendation in 2004.

Catching the big one

The Wethersfield Parks and Recreation Department, in collaboration with the Metropolitan District Commission, UNICO of Wethersfield and the Wethersfield Game Club, sponsored the 6th Annual Good 'Ole Fishing Derby for children April 30 at the Spring Street Pond. The youngsters caught more than 50 fish.

Grades 5-6 winners included Fejzo Akaratovic, Aidan Budhaj, Jace Fleury, Emily Sardo, Nick Frasco and

Adrian Uzar. Grades 2-4 winners included Camden Sharkevich, Michael Manocchio, Mallory McMullen, Garrett Mace, Dominic DiCioccio and Alex Harrison. The youngest group of fishermen including Elliot McMullin, Eliana Sipala, Damian Sardo, Roge Williams, Gus Spaeder, Isabella Stoto and Troy Duelm also reeled them in.

Get a free dental cleaning

People over the age of 60 who live in Berlin, Newington, Rocky Hill or Wethersfield are eligible for a free dental cleaning, courtesy of the Central Connecticut Health District and the North Central Agency on Aging.

Donations are welcome, but not required. There is a limit of five patients per day, reserve a spot by calling Health Educator Lori DiPietro at 860-665-8571.

Health district holds exercise

The Central Connecticut Health District worked alongside local health departments across the state the week of April 11-15 to conduct a Connecticut Department of Public Health Full Scale Exercise.

The purpose of this exercise was to test emergency preparedness. It specifically tested ordering, receiving, preparing and transporting medicine. The security and communication of this plan were also tested. Activities included using mock pallets of medicine to test receiving and distribution in the event of a real emergency.



Students perform at festival

1. The Wethersfield Public Schools sent 26 students to the annual Connecticut Music Educators Association CMEA State Conference in Hartford April 28-30. Students from all five elementary schools were participants in the CMEA Honors Orchestra and Choir.

Moore trains Rwandans

Thomas Moore, principal of Wethersfield High School, and Dr. Joseph Olzacki of the University of Hartford, College of Education, Nursing & Health Professions, provided teacher in-service and training to 50 Rwandan teachers in Kigali, Rwanda, during the April school vacation.

Professional development was provided in the areas of educational leadership, pedagogy and methodology as a part of the Rwandan Teacher Education Program sponsored by the University of Hartford. Moore and Olzacki also visited several Rwandan schools to provide classroom assessments for the teachers attending the training.

Farmers' market returns

The Wethersfield Farmers' Market began its seventh season May 12 and will continue until late October. It operates Thursdays from 3-6 p.m. on the grounds of the Solomon Welles House, 220 Hartford Ave., adjacent to Cove Park.

New vendors this year will include a farm offering early and late season greenhouse produce, hard cheeses, Fair Trade organic coffee by the cup and bag, meats, micro-greens and kits to grow your own, environmentally friendly cleaning products, goat milk soaps and lotions, pottery and more.

Free music each week has already been booked, bringing back last season's most popular performers. For more information go to, wfmarket.org, call 860-578-8650 or find it on Facebook.

Little League returns

Wethersfield Little League held a grand opening day ceremony April 23 at Mill Woods Park. This was the first time in its history leaders planned a big splash to kick off a

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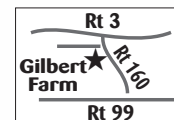
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new season.

Team photos were taken and announcements were made of all the boys and girls playing on the various teams. Mayor Paul Montinieri threw out the first pitch.

Other attractions were face painting, a disc jockey, food, apparel sales and inflatable games. Players contested on the diamond well into the afternoon.

Rooftop garden opens

The CREC Discovery Academy on Cumberland Avenue opened a rooftop garden with a ceremony on April 22. It will serve as an open-air classroom to teach students about vegetables, growing and the eating cycle.

Dollars for Scholars helps 166

Wethersfield Dollars for Scholars held its annual awards evening May 25 at the Pitkin Community Center. A total of \$120,400 was distributed to 166 graduating high school seniors to enable them to further their education.

Scholarships are based primarily on financial need as well as academic accomplishment and community service. Since its inception in 1974 WDS has awarded more than \$2.7

million to 3,424 students.

Helping a sick child

2. A fundraiser was held May 2 at Chip's Family Restaurant to benefit young Charlie Hayes. He is fighting a battle against hemophagocytic lymphohistiocytosis, a rare disease that affects the immune system.

Supporters paid \$15 in return for a meal of two eggs, pancakes, bacon or sausage, and tea or coffee, with all proceeds going to Team Charlie. The event was organized by Destiny Cruz.

CCHD seeks volunteers

The Central Connecticut Health District is looking for medical and non-medical volunteers from Berlin, Newington, Rocky Hill and Wethersfield to assist with district services.

Volunteer opportunities include, but are not limited to: assisting with annual flu and pneumonia clinics; training for live emergency preparedness events, such as flu pandemics, bioterrorism threats and major storms; participating in emergency preparedness drills and providing assistance in emergency shelters.

Residents with experience in

logistics and/or emergency services are particularly desired, but all are welcome. The CCHD is also looking for volunteers who speak English and are also fluent in Spanish, Italian, Hindi, Albanian, Bosnian or Polish.

For more information contact Lori DiPietro at 860-665-8571 or ldipietro@ccthd.org.

Register for Keeney Kids

The Wethersfield Historical Society presents its Keeney Kids Summer History Program Aug. 1-5. Children in grades 1-8 will learn by doing that history is fun.

Keeney Kids will explore town history through activities, tours, stories and games at the Keeney Memorial Cultural Center and surrounding historic sites. The children are divided into groups by grade: Young Adventurers entering grades 1-3, Pyquag People entering grades 4-6 and Mythbusters entering grades 7-8.

The fee is \$75 for society members and \$90 for non-members. After July 15, the price will increase to \$100 and \$110, respectively. Enrollment will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

For information contact Allison

Golomb at 860-529-7161 or allison.golomb@wethersfieldhistory.org or visit wethersfieldhistory.org.

Church fights poverty

Sacred Heart Church in Old Wethersfield is sponsoring an event with Brake the Cycle of Poverty, a nonprofit organization with a social justice mission to increase poverty awareness in the United States, and in particular throughout the state of Connecticut.

Representatives of the organization will ride their bikes to Sacred Heart in time for the 5 p.m. June 25 vigil mass. After mass, they will offer a presentation to not only raise awareness, but provide opportunities to advocate for change. A potluck dinner will precede the presentation. **WL**



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*Stunning sunsets & water views!
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& baths, c/air, 2 car garage.
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bath. Walkout lower level with addition-
al bath. HDWD flrs, 3 season sunroom.
Ivana Marrero (860) 778-8086



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finished LL. Lots of natural light. 1st flr
MB. Private deck, Special Financing.
Marie Padilla (860) 205-2655



EAST HARTFORD \$139,900
DUPLEX Great investment or owner
occupied property. 3BD and 2BD units.
Gas heat. Two separate driveways. Vinyl
sided. Rob Rosa (860) 558-2122



WETHERSFIELD \$178,000
TOWNHOUSE Great location, large back
yard. Vaulted ceilings. Super kitchen,
gas Fireplace. Attached Garage.
Warren Roberts (860) 989-5488



OLD LYME \$295,000
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 Newington - \$189,900 Awesome 3-4 BR Cape w/Lots of Updates! New Windows, Vinyl Siding, Large Fenced Yard, Updated Electrical, Newer Furnace & HW Heater, Hardwood Floors, Over 1,000SF in Fully Finished Lower Level with Bar!!	 Rocky Hill - \$194,900 Charming Colonial with a Gorgeous Kitchen w/ New Cabinets, Breakfast Nook & Corian Counters! New Bath w/Claw Foot Soaking Tub, Corner Shower & Vanity! New Roof & Windows, Hardwood Floors, Enclosed Porch!!	 Wethersfield - \$359,900 Pristine Dutch Colonial on .75 Acre Lot in Move In Condition!! Huge Sunken Bonus Rm w/Vaulted Ceiling Leads to Awesome Private Yard! Granite Kitchen, Master Suite, Newer Furnace, New Windows!!
 Wethersfield - \$349,900 Fabulous 2300SF 4 Bed, 2 1/2 Bath Colonial, Entertain in 1000SF of Outdoor Living Space, 2 Tiered Deck, Pergola, Stone Patio, Barn, Custom Stone Fire pit, Fenced Yard, Gas Heat, Granite Kitchen, Newer Roof!!	 Wethersfield - \$239,900 Lovely Updated Ranch in Move In Condition! Newly Remodeled Kitchen & Bath, New Roof, Vinyl Siding, C/Air, Gas Heat, LR with Gas F/p, Freshly Painted, 1st Flr Laundry, Att. Garage, Breezeway & Deck, Driveway on South Pembroke!	 Wethersfield - \$219,900 Spacious 2 Bed, 2 1/2 Bath Ranch Style Condo at Millpointe! Gas Heat, HW, C/Air Are Included in Monthly Fees! Open Floor Plan, Fireplace, Screened Terrace, Elevator, Clubhouse, 2 Car Garage, Secured Building!!

 Newington \$387,999 Located in the desirable Barn Hill neighborhood! 3 beds, 2.5 baths, 2,133 SF, 2 car garage, finished lower level, Gas Heat, CAir, manicured 1.5 acres, granite kitchen, wood floors, & trex deck. Nothing has been missed! Call Rob 860-573-1711.	 Wethersfield \$299,900 One floor living at its finest! 3 beds, 3 full baths, 2 car garage, 1634 SF, all brick ranch style home. Hardwood throughout, Master bedroom suite, CAir, Gas Heat, newer roof and boiler, manicured lawn.	 Newington \$199,900 Meticulously maintained, 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, 2 car garage, .84 acres, 1744 SF, new windows, siding and roofing, Central Air, enormous family room, eat-in kitchen, remodeled bath with glass tile and bowl sink.
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EAST HARTFORD \$109,935

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WETHERSFIELD \$815,000

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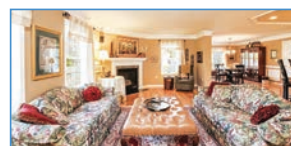
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Wethersfield \$559,900 31 Westmont Road

Exceptional Property! Pristine setting off Old Reservoir. Custom built w/4 BR's, 2 story foyer with T-staircase. FR w/wall of windows, eat-in kit, DR & LR. Location!



Wethersfield \$399,900 860 Wells Road

Gorgeous Cape Cod! Custom kitchen opens to dining area and living room with gas fp. 1st floor MSTR suite. Quality features and efficient.



Wethersfield \$699,900 75 Thornbush Road

Stately Custom Col w/porte cochere, 6700+ sq. ft., 5 BRs, indoor pool, grand center staircase, 6 car garage on 1.75 acres. New Roof!



Wethersfield \$369,999 132 Broad Street

Brick Colonial with direct views of the Broad Street Green. Updated rooms with authentic details. 3 Brs, backyard for gatherings and updated mechanicals.



Wethersfield \$387,500 5 Thornbush Road

Always admired Ranch!! Custom size windows and flexible floor plan makes this a true GEM! In-ground pool, fenced in yard, quality throughout!



Rocky Hill \$569,900 55 Murphy Drive

Custom built Energy-Star Colonial located in sought after west-end. Open floor plan, 9 foot ceilings. First floor MB suite. Eat-in kitchen opens to family room w/gas fireplace. Formal DR & LR.



Wethersfield \$309,000 62 Back Lane

Colonial w/3 Bdrms & 2 1/2 baths, renovated kitchen, refinished hardwood floors! Enclosed porch & finished lower level. Gas, baseboard heat & CAIR.



Wethersfield \$544,900 40 Bobwhite Hill

Exceptional Property! Elegant design Ranch features front columns, two story foyer, 9' ceilings, and Palladium windows.



Wethersfield \$339,900 58 Gooseberry Hill

Spacious 4 Bedroom Jefferson Split in desirable location. Open front porch, vinyl sided, CAIR and newer roof and windows.

Wethersfield's Top
Selling Agent!

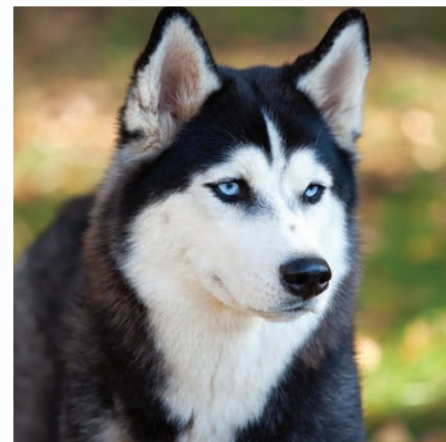
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Events *spotlight*

Mayor's Charity Ball

June 3, 6 p.m.

Wethersfield Country Club
76 Country Club Road
860-563-6762

Come to this inaugural black tie optional event and help raise money for the town food bank. The evening features dinner, dancing, a silent auction and raffle. Tickets are \$75 per person and sponsorship opportunities are available at various price levels.

Fireworks

June 4, 5 p.m.

Cove Park

wethersfieldchamber.com

The Wethersfield Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the town, once again hosts a fireworks display. There will be food vendors, fun activities for children, a disc jockey, the high school band Fever and the Colonel John Chester Fife and Drum Corps. Buffalo Wild Wings will sponsor a "Blaze Off" hot wing eating competition. The launch site will be moved to a higher elevation to allow for better viewing and

the new spectator area will be north of the Solomon Welles House on the Hartford Avenue side. If it rains, the show will take place June 11.

3rd Annual Bicycle Festival

June 5, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Hanmer School

tbrown@wethersfield.me

This free family friendly festival, show and swap is sponsored by the Wethersfield High School Bicycle Club. Buy, sell or trade bikes and parts. Ride and show off your wheels. Attend demonstrations including a flat tire changing clinic. Sellers pay \$25 per space. This event will move indoors if the weather is inclement.

Eleanor Buck Wolf Day

June 11, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Eleanor Buck Wolf Nature Center
156 Prospect St.

friendsofebwnaturecenter.org

The nature center presents a free day of family fun and education honoring the legacy of Eleanor Buck Wolf. Brian Kleinman of Riverside Reptiles will be the main exhibitor, with two live animal shows: Reptiles & Amphibians at 11 a.m. and Snakes at

1:30 p.m. Other activities include crafts for all ages and a guided bird watching tour of Mill Woods Park at noon. Guests can also tour the nature center and view the new animal exhibits in its Reptile Room.

Textile Treasures Digging Deeper Tour

June 11, 10:30 a.m. & 1:30 p.m.

Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum
211 Main St.

860-529-0612 or

webb-deane-stevens.org

When textile and costume expert Lynne Bassett was invited to consult on a new textile tour at the museum, she was pleasantly surprised at the quality of the collection. For the first time, the public can get a behind-the-scenes view of this historic and well-preserved collection including a man's crewel purse, crewel christening robe, worsted quilts and a rare wooden tricorne hat box, among many others. Admission is \$15. Additional Digging Deeper Tour events are scheduled for Aug. 13 and Oct. 8.

Spaghetti Dinner to Support Jack Casey

June 17, 6-9 p.m.

Pitkin Community Center
30 Greenfield St.

This special event is held in partnership with Amy's Angels for Jack Casey, son of Jack and Gina Casey of Wethersfield. He was diagnosed with

Oligodendroglioma, a slow-growing and incurable brain tumor. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children. There will be a pasta dinner as well as a raffle and silent auction. Tickets are available at eventbrite.com/e/spaghetti-dinner-to-support-jack-casey-tickets-25208639720.

Tax-deductible donations may be made at amysangels.org; click on the Jack Casey Fund link to donate. Another option is gofundme.com/JackCasey. For more information contact Vin Stifano at vinstifano.com, Dave Yandow at jowave@aol.com, or Elizabeth Casey at ecasey51@gmail.com.

Mikey's Place Charity Golf Classic

June 25, 1 p.m.

Goodwin Park Golf Course

1130 Maple Ave., Hartford

860-965-8551, 860-529-2711 or

mikeysplaceplayground@gmail.com

Proceeds from this 15th annual event will benefit Mikey's Place and research into spinal muscular atrophy. The registration fee of \$130 per golfer includes light lunch on the course and dinner after the tournament. Proceeds from this event will benefit both the Mikey's Place Preservation Fund and Cure SMA. Cure SMA is a national, volunteer, not-for-profit organization dedicated to raising funds for research of spinal muscular atrophy. **WL**

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June calendar

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

3 Drop-in Playtime/Storytime, 10 a.m., Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2801 or wethersfieldlibrary.org, also June 10, 17 and 24

Mayor's Charity Ball, 6 p.m., Wethersfield Country Club, 76 Country Club Road, \$75 per person, 860-563-6762

4 Fandom Fun Saturdays, 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org, also June 11, 18 and 25

Fireworks Show, 5 p.m., Cove Park, wethersfieldchamber.com, rain date July 11

5 Hockanum Valley Ringers Hand Bell Concert, 4 p.m., Wethersfield United Methodist Church, 150 Prospect St., 860-375-0333 or hvringers.org

8 Author/Illustrator Marty Kelley, 6 p.m., Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

11 150 Prospect Coffeehouse, 6:30 p.m., Wethersfield United Methodist Church, 150 Prospect St., 860-614-5158 or tanjam@comcast.net

Eleanor Buck Wolf Day, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Eleanor Buck Wolf Nature Center, 156 Prospect St., friendsofeb-

wnaturecenter.org

Textile Treasures Digging Deeper Tour, 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m., Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum, 211 Main St., 860-529-0612 or webb-deane-stevens.org

Saturday Cinema "Random Harvest," 1:30 p.m., Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2801 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

14 Adult Summer Reading Kick-off, 6-8 p.m., Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2801 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

17 Spaghetti Dinner to Support Jack Casey, 6-9 p.m., Pitkin

Community Center, 30 Greenfield St., \$10 for adults and \$5 for children, vinstifano.com, jowave@aol.com, or ecasey51@gmail.com

28 GFWC Newington/Wethersfield Woman's Club, 7 p.m., Newington Senior & Disabled Center, 120 Cedar St., Newington, 860-666-4371

Library Board, 7 p.m., Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2801 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

Is your club, community organization, school or house of worship holding an event open to the general public? If so, please send us the details for inclusion in our calendar. Email your events to Mark Jahne at mjahne@turleyct.com or mail them to Turley CT Community

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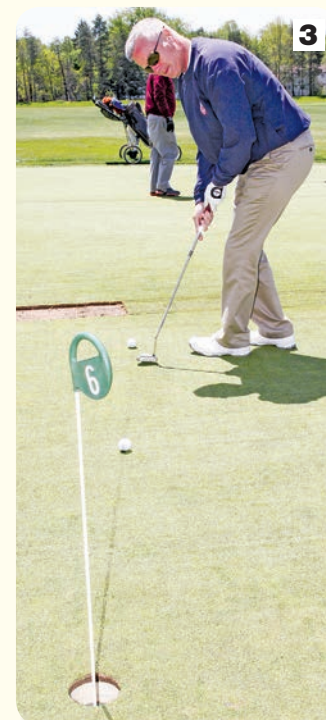
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Slice of LIFE

photos by Lisa Brisson

The Wethersfield Country Club was the place to be May 16 for golf, camaraderie and food, all for a great cause as a total of 113 golfers took part in the 14th Annual Keane Foundation Wethersfield UNICO Golf Tournament. The fundraiser, which benefits the charitable activities of both organizations, was topped off with a buffet dinner featuring a raffle and auction.



Keane and UNICO play golf

1. The putting green was a busy place prior to the start of the tournament. **2.** Eric Bzura works on his swing at the driving range. **3.** John Hathaway warms up on the putting green. **4.** Derek Fairfield, Marc Pfalzgraf, Mick Pfalzgraf, Tim Keane and Rob Kraska enjoy beverages. **5.** UNICO chefs on duty included Sal LaRosa, Joe Pandolfe and Nicholas Follacchio. **6.** Michael Stefano, founding member of the Wethersfield Chapter of UNICO, chats with President Emidio Pizzoferrato. **7.** Wethersfield Mayor Paul Montinieri, Jim Casey and Ben Goldman are ready to start. **8.** Judy Keane, executive director of the Richard M. Keane Foundation, and Tony Santucci of the Wethersfield Chapter of UNICO International, served as co-chairmen of this year's event. **9.** Mark Raymond, Dwight Otis, Tony Cavallaro and Nick D'Eramo board their golf carts. **10.** Steve Barrett purchases raffle tickets from Tom Misenti and Vinnie D'Angelo (background). **11.** Josh Detmer instructs the golfers on the tournament's format. **12.** Tom DiCioccio, Jr., Mike Orsini, Brian DiCioccio and Rich Bailey are good to go.



LIVING Your Best LIFE

Age doesn't bother her

Jane Silver continues to enjoy life even in her late 90s

by Mark Jahne
Editor

Age is simply a case of mind over matter for Jane Silver. As far as she's concerned, it's just a number and she's not going to let it steal her joy.

Silver, 97, lives in her own apartment at AHEPA senior housing on the Berlin Turnpike and displays plenty of energy and a positive outlook. She has a cleaning woman and her other basic needs are met by Rena Citron, a case manager with Connecticut Community Care, Inc. The two have become close friends.

"This is just perfect for me," Silver said. "I couldn't have managed it without her."

She was told about another resident who is 90. She just smiled.

"At 90, I was a kid. I was still driving and everything," Silver said.

She lived in New Britain and Rhode Island before moving to Wethersfield

many years ago; AHEPA has been her home for the past four years. Silver said having family close by gives her comfort. They visit on a regular basis and take her to all of the holiday celebrations, parties and other family gatherings.

"I don't think I could have lived this long without them," she said.

She recently flew to Chicago to attend the birthday party of her older sister, who just turned 100. The two women talk on the phone every afternoon.

"It was very exciting. It was such a beautiful party," she said.

There are several attorneys in the family including her son, grandson, two granddaughters and her late husband. Silver boasts of an African-American son-in-law and a Chinese great-grandson and loves that cultural and racial mix.

She has four grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. She got married at 21 and never had to work. Her activity level declined a bit after 90 because of



Jane Silver sits alongside Rena Citron, her case manager from Connecticut Community Care, Inc.

Photo by Mark Jahne

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LIVING Your Best LIFE

some health issues, but she still enjoys life to the best of her ability. She had to give up driving and housework.

"It was a different life [back then]. I could be up and around and exercising and outdoors. I love to hike and I love to swim. I had a really good walk this morning," she said.

Silver's mother was an avid walker and strode at least four miles every day. She lived into her 90s.

This positive-minded senior citizen enjoys walking and swimming at Mill Woods Park. The beach is another favorite spot and she looks forward to spending a week at the Rhode Island shore this summer.

"I'm an avid reader," she said.

She has suffered partial loss of sight in one eye so her family bought her a Kindle, allowing her to enlarge the type. Her favorite books are detective stories.

She was born in 1918, the same year her beloved Boston Red Sox won the World Series. They didn't do it again until she was 86. Plans are already being fomented to take in at least one game at Fenway Park this summer. She watches all of the Red

Sox games on television.

Silver loves baseball in general and recalled attending a World Series game involving the New York Yankees and Brooklyn Dodgers. She remembers how Joe DiMaggio got a clutch hit and, when she turned to share the excitement with her husband, he was fast asleep.

Politics is another thing that runs in the Silver family. Her son Daniel is a former elected official who most recently served as co-chairman of the Charter Revision Commission and her daughter-in-law Polly Moon is a member of the Board of Education.

She enjoys watching town government and school board meetings on Wethersfield Community Television.

A Democrat, she recalled participating in protest marches and picketing during her youth. Her favorite candidate for president is U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont.

"I've always been into politics. When I lived in Rhode Island they wanted to put an atomic power plant practically in my back yard,"

Silver said.

She and other residents successfully defeated those plans.

"I've had a charmed life," she said. "I never let things get me down."

The world didn't always go well for her but she refuses to allow anything to dampen her positive attitude. That includes the death of her husband and two of her children.

Silver grew up during the Great Depression. Money was tight, but her father owned a fur shop and was able to keep a roof over their heads and food on the table.

"I couldn't get a new dress for my eighth grade dance," she said with a laugh.

In recent years, Silver has endured a stroke and open heart surgery. That slowed her down a bit and made her more dependent on others. She is grateful for the work that Citron, the case manager, does on her behalf.

"I don't know how I could have managed all this without Rena," she said.

Gayle Kataja stopped by one recent day to visit Silver and Citron.

Kataja is the director of community integration and partnerships for CCCI, a private, nonprofit care management agency.

She explained that the agency has the capability of arranging for 24-hour care. It has 250 contracts with specific kinds of service providers, including visiting nurses and home care professionals.

The focus is on enabling older people to live in the comfort and familiarity of their homes as long as possible. The entire focus of CCCI is on its clients.

"We are one of the contracting agencies for Money Follows the Person," Kataja said.

That's a federal demonstration project dedicated to assuring Connecticut residents access to a full range of high-quality, long-term care options that maximize their autonomy, choice and dignity. It is administered through the state Department of Social Services. **WL**
For more information about Connecticut Community Care, Inc., call 866-845-2224 or see ctcommunitycare.org.



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Getting away

European river cruises, Italy, Ireland and Florida remain popular destinations

by Lynn Woike
LIFE Staff

“**T**oday’s seniors are traveling more than ever before. Being retired, they have the time and tend to plan longer trips, too. Today’s seniors are also much more adventurous and active than their parents were,” Martha Kirsche at Wethersfield Travel said.

Recent senior groups have traveled to France, Italy, Scotland, Costa Rica and the Canadian Rockies.

Regardless of the destination, she said, “Escorted tours are also a very popular option for seniors because all the details of the day

“Extremely popular, especially with seniors, are European river cruises.”

– Suzanne Aresco, AAA travel manager



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“When choosing an escorted tour it is important to select the itinerary you want, the pace of travel you desire – how many nights in each destination – and the level of activity,” Kirsche said.

“Some older adults would prefer a quiet bird walk through the rain forest in Costa Rica, where others really want to zip line through the trees.”

Suzanne Aresco, travel manager at AAA, also finds guided vacations to be the most popular type of vacation for older people. There are trips that do not change hotels every night, that have later start times for tours and building in some free time, yet getting to all the must-see sites.

“More of a relaxed pace is something I’m certainly seeing for senior citizens,” she said.

She added there are trips to many destinations that accommodate travelers wishing to go at a slower pace. Aresco said most people have a sense of what country they want to visit and know what they want to see. Italy remains an extremely popular destination for seniors.

“The other type of travel that is extremely popular, especially with seniors, are European river cruises, with some of the most popular rivers being the Rhine and the Danube. This is a great way to travel right through the heart of Central Europe,” she said.

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only unpack once and trips tend to be all inclusive. “The boat is a floating hotel,” she said.

While most river cruise boats can accommodate special needs, large cruise ships are well equipped to meet any mobility challenges and travel obstacles. They have handicap accessible staterooms and health care professionals onboard.

“When we have someone in a situation like that, we can work with an escorted tour partner to make accommodations,” Aresco said.

Ireland is a popular destination

“Ireland is an incredibly easy destination. It’s easy to get around, there’s not a language barrier, they’re very friendly to the U.S. visitor,” she said.

Those looking to travel there will be able to fly non-stop daily from Bradley to Dublin on Aer Lingus beginning in September.

Sharyn Holmes, senior center coordinator for the town of Farmington, said that health, finances and whether or not someone has a spouse with whom to travel typically impact choices made by those in their 70s and 80s.

“Travel gets more difficult as they age,” she said.

Older adults may have limitations, in which case, “they do need someone watching out for them when a special need arises, someone they can lean on if something comes up,” Holmes said.

“We do more day trips because they have more difficulty traveling far,” she said. “A lot of seniors don’t like to fly anymore.”

Be they for a day or two weeks, she finds structured tours are the most popular.

Having a partner also makes a huge difference, Holmes said, not only for companionship, but when it comes to accommodations – the single rate is \$100 or more than the double-occupancy per person cost.

When she plans trips, she typically chooses those that use only one or two hotels for a 10-day period.

“They don’t like bouncing from hotel to hotel,” she said of older travelers.

For that reason, she also sees seniors taking advantage of European river cruises. Italy and Ireland remain popular destinations, Holmes added.



She also knows of many seniors who travel to Florida for the winter months.

“There is something for everyone and the important part of planning a trip for seniors is to match them with the trip that is right for them,” Kirsche said.

Friendship Tours Vice President Amy Schoen noted that motor coach trips are popular with people of a certain age who don’t want to drive. An added benefit is that someone else has already worked out the details, purchased tickets, selected a restaurant, etc.

The company offers day trips throughout New England, New York and New Jersey, with overnight stays of one to eight nights in such places as Myrtle Beach, S.C., and Washington, D.C.

“The reason we’re called [Friendship Travel] is because we believe that friendships are formed through travel,” Schoen said.

No matter the destination, Aresco strongly urges people to work with a professional travel advisor who has knowledge of destinations and travel options.

“Don’t try to do it yourself. We don’t charge for our services and we’re going to be there through the entire process to help guide you and advise you,” she said.

While a AAA membership is not required to take advantage of the agency’s travel assistance, members do get special benefits. **WL**

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Editorial

It's time to clean up the fiscal mess

The state legislature is in the throes of one of its most unpleasant sessions in recent memory. The state budget is untenable, the deficit is completely out of control and getting worse, and next year promises to be even more grim.

How did we get into this mess? The short answer is careless spending, big government, trying to fund every program that came along, and then some. Also to blame are years of raises for state employees and maintenance of a benefit package that few in the private or nonprofit sector enjoy.

It's easy to spend someone else's money. They do it in Washington, D.C., all the time, and Connecticut is no different. Just increase taxes or borrow more and don't worry about the ramifications until they arrive.

Well, those ramifications have arrived, and are falling on us like unrelenting rain. Trimming and tucking won't fix the problem. Major cuts are needed and major changes in how state government operates must be adopted so that, once we dig out of this sinkhole, we don't fall in again.

Gone are the days when employee unions can say they are doing their part by only asking for a 1 or 2 percent wage increase. A large number of the working residents of Connecticut have not seen a raise of even \$1 in years, so there is little support for those who paychecks grow with every contract.

These same people with flat wages are also paying more every year for health insurance. Union people are paying more, too, but they tend to have better plans.



While the cuts need to be made with a hacksaw rather than a scalpel, certain programs should be spared as much as possible, specifically those that help people who can't help themselves. That means programs serving senior citizens, little children, the unemployed and those with disabilities.

The legislature and governor would also be wise to take a comprehensive look at the business climate. Connecticut is a notoriously business-unfriendly state and if that doesn't change we will most assuredly see more major corporations and even smaller operations move to greener pastures, as General Electric did a few months ago when it announced it is vacating Fairfield.

Business taxes here are too

high and there are too many of them. Regulations are even more numerous and ponderous. There are some that need to stay, like those that protect the environment and workers, but others that have limited value can easily be discontinued.

With all of the attention being paid to the presidential campaign, little has been said yet about the legislative elections that are also on tap this November. That will change when candidates are formally nominated and voters are encouraged to pay close attention to what the candidates for the state Senate and House have to say.

What they do, in many ways, affects us more than what happens in Washington. We need to ask them what they are going to do to get us out of this fiscal mess. **WL**

Letters to the Editor

Reflects on autism story

To the Editor:

I am 17 and a senior at Wethersfield High School and I'm sending you this letter in regards to the "Autism Families CONNECTicut opens its first home" article.

After reading this article, I've come to realize how passionate I feel about this topic, the topic of doing whatever you could for your kids. It's amazing how mother Jackie Procyk started an organization that not only benefited her children, but other people's children as well.

This takes the meaning "I would do anything for my child" to a whole other level.

Procyk was right to be very upset about the fact that there weren't enough programs for children with autism and I wonder now why is that? I know that some programs wouldn't be fit for an autistic child, but why hasn't anyone stood up for their child and created a fun program for them to enjoy?

I'll tell you why, most people don't have the courage to stand up for what they truly want. People might want a program for autistic children to fall right at their feet, but in some cases (like this one) things

like that won't happen.

I would love to say I did something like this for my child; this truly shows love and appreciation. I'm very proud I stumbled across this article, it completely changed my outlook on certain programs like these and sheds light on incredible moms like Jackie Procyk and others such as she.

Vinny Bongiovanni

Learned a lot about the country club

To the Editor:

I read your article on the 100th anniversary of the Wethersfield Country Club. I am a junior member at this club and I was very interested and happy with what I read. Though I am at the club almost every day of the week practicing, there is a lot I do not know about the club I am very much involved in.

The first thing that surprised me was hearing that the club burned down in 1942. I didn't know this building was fairly new, I also didn't know the club was 100 years old. It was fascinating to hear about all the events hosted there and all the huge professional golf names that have been to my home course. Lee

Trevino and Arnold Palmer have been to this course, both of whom are legends of the game.

Reading about the women's division was also interesting. There are only 40 women members and 450 members total. I am aware of the fact that there's an active women's division, but it is relevant to note that men's day is every Thursday, which, in my opinion, is ridiculous considering there are so few women members as it is.

This limitation is inequitable and unfairly affects my practice opportunities. Hopefully there will eventually be no restrictions on women and let's hope it doesn't take 100 more years for this to occur.

Lastly, why I enjoyed reading this article was because one of my closest friends was praised and he deserves it. Cody Paladino is one of the most respectable golfers I've met, not only for his golf accomplishments but his personality. I'm always trying to better my game and Cody was humble enough to give me his time.

He eventually began helping me with my college process and I'm so grateful to him for helping me get organized. He's a positive influence

and it's awesome for me to benefit from his expertise at golf and be that close to a professional golfer.

Julia Migliorati

Thoughts on marriage

To the Editor:

I am a student at Wethersfield High School. I read the letter to the editor, "Thoughts on a long marriage." It made me think about how marriages today don't seem to last as long (72 years) and I've wondered why.

When I read this it made me realize one reason the Lasher's marriage lasted for 72 years was because they never stayed angry at each other for long. In the article it said, "We had mild disagreements, but never went to bed still angry." They communicated with one another and shared their feelings.

Also, the way he talks about her saying, "I liked her at the first meeting." That's how I feel you know when your marriage is going to last, by the way you speak about your loved one to other people.

Thank you for printing this letter. It was beautiful and inspirational.

Redona Karamanaj

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Spot and Precious are a brother-sister pair that can be adopted either together or separately. He's black and white and 7 years old. She's a calico/tortoise mix and 4

years old. They are OK with other cats, older children and perhaps even some dogs.

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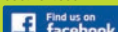
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Going into the 2016 Hurricane Season...

The Atlantic Hurricane Season of 2015 featured 11 named storms, 4 reached hurricane status and of those only 2 became MAJOR hurricanes. Furthermore, there were just two (Ana and Bill) that made US landfalls (both as tropical storms).

The list of names last year is one of 6 used in rotation for the

Atlantic Basin (including the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean) ... alternating gender, starting at the top of the alphabet. Two names will be retired by the WMO (World Meteorological Organization, a group of international scientists) for the list that will be used again in 2021. Erika will be replaced with "Elsa" and Joaquin will be replaced with

"Julian." Names are retired when a storm was either so deadly or costly.

The Atlantic season runs from June 1st through November 30th ... we'll of course keep you updated on any and all development! In fact, Alex already formed (in January, the 1st to do so since 1955 in that month). The complete list is in the graphic above.

Before getting a name, a Tropical Depression forms (they get numbers). An "average season" includes 12 Tropical Storms (wind 39mph or greater), 6 Hurricanes (wind 74mph or greater) and 3 Major Hurricanes (111mph or greater). The initial outlook for 2016 is for the season to be perhaps more active than the past several years. [WHL](#)



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